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Welcome... to a time of reflection



Hello friends. A few things I've read this issue have made me pause and reflect. Firstly, that my love for this community grows ever more when I see a group of artists rallying round to help Allen Williams. Turn to page 29 for more.

But in particular, In-Ah Roediger's interview (page 42) resonates with my own experiences of life and work. She talks openly about the pressures of working all hours in the animation industry and I identify with her drive and determination to succeed. But I'm also struck by the sacrifices made in pursuit of a job or hobby we adore.

While having a passion can be fulfilling, if left unchecked it can take over your life and cause more harm than good. I've lost count of the times I've heard of near-burnout experiences from artist friends who've worked 24/7 on project after project, only stopping to take stock when faced with a trip to the doctors or hospital.

I'm grateful to do something I love. But it's intense and all-consuming. I need an outlet. I've finally learned to force myself to unplug from my desk at a regular hour, go home and do something else. For me it's cooking. Preparing a meal from scratch (okay, and devouring it, too...) enables me to zone out and relax.

Try to focus on what activity unplugs you – exercise, friends, TV... whatever! If your passion is taking up all your time, stressing you out, or making you ill, it's gone too far. Recognise this and find another outlet. Your art will thank you for it.

Claire

Claire Howlett, Editor
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Our special cover for
subscribers this issue.



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"All you really want to do at the end of the day is have a very, very large glass of wine"
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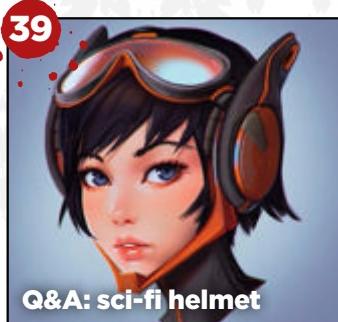
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Turn over the page for this issue's art assets



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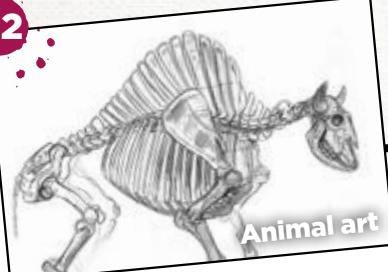
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Create light and motion



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Animal art





ImagineFX Resources

Getting hold of all of this issue's videos, artwork and brushes is quick and easy. Just visit our dedicated web page <http://ifxm.ag/moving124art>

COVER WORKSHOP

How to control visual contrast

Sam Nielson shows how he balances a complicated illustration, by using just three simple rules...

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EXCLUSIVE VIDEO TUITION!

Watch our videos to gain a unique insight into how our artists create their stunning art



Aaron Blaise

Learn the 12 principles of animation as Aaron paints a larger-than-life character.
Plus WIPs and final image



Tyson Murphy

Gain valuable insight into how to paint a painterly and stylised, rugged character.
Plus WIPs, brushes and final image



Jeremy Vickery

See how animators make use of colour keys to establish lighting and mood.
Plus WIPs and final image



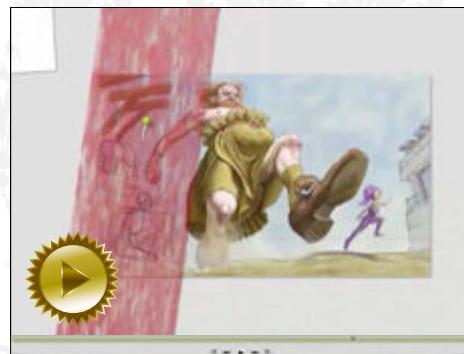
David Adhinarya Lojaya

Learn simple guidelines to develop a character from sketch to animation-ready.
Plus WIPs, brushes and final image



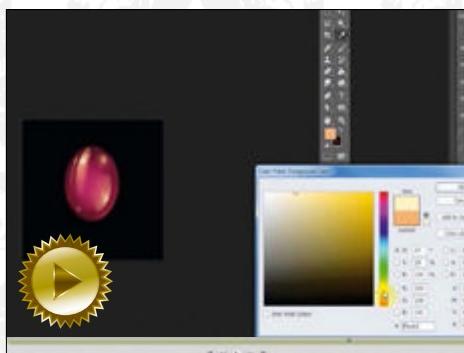
Mark Molnar

Think about aging and surroundings to depict a realistic stone character.
Plus WIPs and final image



Nick Harris

Make use of perspective and proportions to tackle a scene from a very low eye-level.
Plus WIPs and final image



Tony Foti

Understand how light interacts with surfaces to create shimmering jewels.
Plus WIPs and final image



Nick Harris

Create effects almost impossible to spot, to portray an anthropomorphic landscape.
Plus WIPs and final image



James Gurney

In Tyrannosaurs: Behind The Art the master illustrator shares an in-depth look at creating two dinosaur paintings.

AND ALL THIS! WIPs and finished art available to download, created by accomplished professional artists from around the world including this issue, Aurélien Fournier, Ilya Kuvshinov, Brynn Metheney, Socar Myles, Katarzyna Oleska and Donglu Yu..

9 CUSTOM BRUSHES, INCLUDING...

MURPHY_BRISTLE

Tyson Murphy's custom brush that he uses for "just about everything".

PORE BRUSH

David Adhinarya Lojaya uses this for detailing and adding texture.

BASIC TEXTURED SQUARE

Used for texture, Aurélien Fournier says this brush gives him good control.



Reader EXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

Crystal Sullivan

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MEDIA: Photoshop



Illustrator and monster maker Crystal works within the realms of the "untamed", creating art that reaches into the darkest corners of her imagination. "I enjoy scaring people and getting a reaction out of my art," she says.

Crystal works in a variety of different styles, producing everything from tightly rendered creatures to bold and graphic portraits. She spent some time in the tattoo industry and loves good line work, which is how every one of her images begins: "I'm excited to continue to bring to life amazing books, games, worlds and, of course, monsters!"

1 THE TOMB KEEPER "This was a commissioned custom play mat by Artists of Magic/Action Sports. They let me run with the subject matter and the dark mood of the piece, resulting in something pretty fun that I got to spend a lot of time on."



TAP FOR GALLERY

Crystal Sullivan

Artist crit

Concept artist Mark Molnar says that Crystal is one artist to watch



"Crystal's skill lies in being able to enhance the focal areas of her art, which gives it greater impact and also sucks the viewer into her well-realised imagined world. Good work!"



Email your submissions to fxpose@imaginefx.com





IMAGINEFX CRIT



"I'm glad Lauren found the time to complete her scene based on American Gods. I'm not familiar with the book, but seeing the atmospheric, multi-layered image that Lauren produced makes me want to know more about it."

Cliff Hope,
Operations Editor



Lauren Newburg
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EMAIL: lmlnewburg@gmail.com
MEDIA: Photoshop



Starting with faeries, sprites and magical things that would spark her imagination from books, Lauren began illustration at aged 10. She would imagine what the creatures inside her fairytales would look like and draw them.

"I knew I wanted to tell stories with art from a very early age," she remembers, "My parents were always very supportive of me. My mother's side of the family are all artists in one form or another. I'm just starting my career, and I feel like it's an exciting time to be doing what I do."

 **TAP FOR GALLERY**
Lauren Newburg

1 FINDING STRENGTH "I did this piece when I was having a difficult time balancing my job at the time, and making art. It was all feeling impossible, and I wanted a painting that would give me strength. This was the result."

2 THE VALE WORM "Dragons are always fun to illustrate, and I wanted to show one that was different than others I had done in the past. I made this one into a forest spirit, with very earthy details and a stocky, low build."

3 AND SHADOW SAW THE GODS... "I love Neil Gaiman books, and had wanted to do a scene from American Gods for a long time. I abandoned this painting a couple times for commissions and responsibilities, and when I was able to finally come back to it, I was very proud of the result."

Patrick Yeung

LOCATION: US

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EMAIL: patrick@vdkstudio.com

MEDIA: Photoshop



Patrick is a self-taught freelance digital artist with a background in oil painting. "My work usually starts with a simple idea," he says, "and through research and reference gathering, it gradually comes together in a brainstorm of sketches. After having the blueprint for the project, I'll either make it into a painting or 3D model."

His work has a strong oil painting influence, taking inspiration from Thomas Moran's landscapes and the works of Gustav Klimt and Christian Gaillard. When discovering digital art he took cues from Linda Bergkvist and Mélanie Delon, "Their depictions of realistic portraits combined with a flare of fantasy captivated me."



1 SIGILS "This is a character concept painting of a sorceress with demonic sigils. The painting began with a simple idea of a beautiful woman laying on top of a golden silk sheet."

2 LUCAS "This is one of the characters from an IP I'm writing. Lucas is one of the children from a surviving wealthy family in a chaotic world. I used the male model Alexander Krupov as a reference for the face."

3 CROWN OF BABYLON "I did this concept painting for fun while trying to come up with different headdresses. I liked the sketch so I decided to flesh it out in colour."

1



2

3



TAP FOR GALLERY
Patrick Yeung

3



IMAGINEFX CRIT

"There's some lovely rendering of silk going on in Patrick's Sigils image. The character's couldn't-care-less expression and body pose speaks volumes about the magical power she no doubt wields."



Beren Neale,
Commissioning Editor

Christy Tortland

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EMAIL: christytort@gmail.com
MEDIA: Photoshop



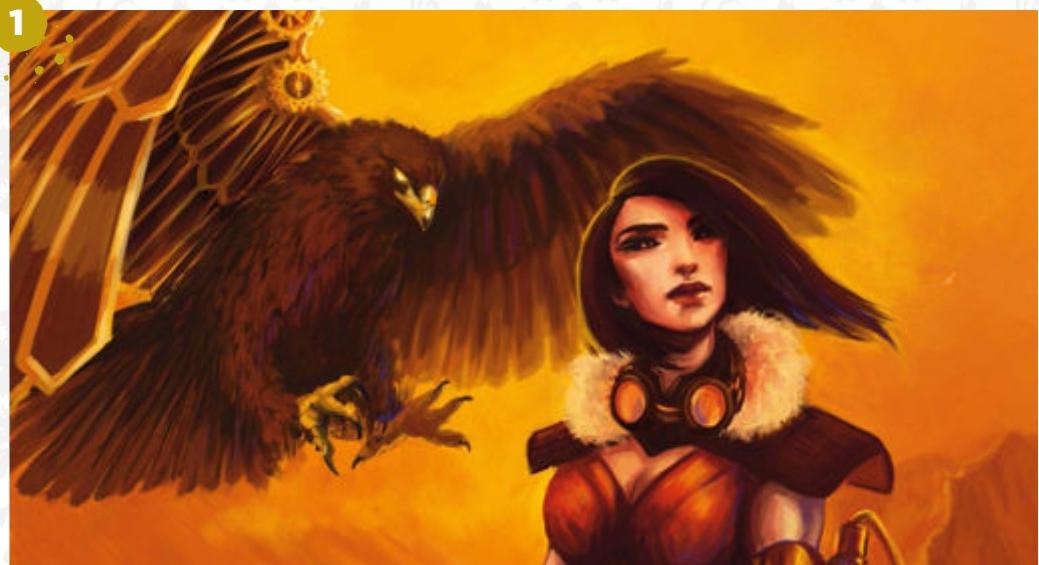
Christy has just graduated from the Art Institute of Boston. Her influences range from the masters such as da Vinci to modern artists like Donato Giancola and Iain McCaig. Sci-fi and fantasy art is her passion, with the likes of Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings, as well as classical mythology shaping her works. "I'm a huge comics lover," says Christy. "I draw inspiration from artists such as Alex Garner, the late Michael Turner and Babs Tarr."



1 EAGLE ARCHER "This was an entry for an online challenge to create a steampunk warrior. I wanted to play with the idea of young eagle hunters in Asia, and then combined these elements."

2 ARTEMIS "I've been influenced by Greek mythology since I was a child, and wanted to depict my own take on Artemis, goddess of the Moon and hunt, using various influences. I played up the glow of the Moon to help make the picture have an ethereal quality."

3 HADES AND PERSEPHONE "My own take on Hades and Persephone, with Asian influences. I wanted to experiment with colour and texture in this piece, such as the design on her dress and Hades armour."



1



Anna Warzecha

LOCATION: Poland
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MEDIA: Photoshop



Anna's world is one filled with the fantastic, yet maintains an uneasy and disturbingly nightmarish quality. Her paintings chart her journey through these mystical lands of imagination. The children's book illustrator loves to play with light and shadow with her works. "I'm inspired by reality, literature and a good movie," she says. "I try to remember interesting images, processing them in my imagination, giving them new meanings... then I start to paint!"

Feelings drive Anna's art and she loves to design new places where only the imagination can reach, adding the obscure to reality.

2



1 MAGIC FOREST "It was the time when I just had to paint a mysterious forest. More importantly, it was an exciting opportunity to develop a new way of painting. It was like reaching the next level for me."

2 THE GARDEN "This theme had been haunting me for some time. I've always been fascinated with old, neglected houses and their surroundings such as wild plants and mysterious statues. I left a trace of a human (or inhuman) being by adding a warm light behind the door. Who knows what's going on there?"

3 DARK CHURCH "This idea appeared in my head out of the blue in a very undefined shape. I wanted to paint something dark and atmospheric, but I didn't know exactly where it would lead. The word 'church' was the direction and it was combined with this mood. Meanwhile, I tested some new brushes, so it became a new exercise."

3



TAP FOR GALLERY
Anna Warzecha

1

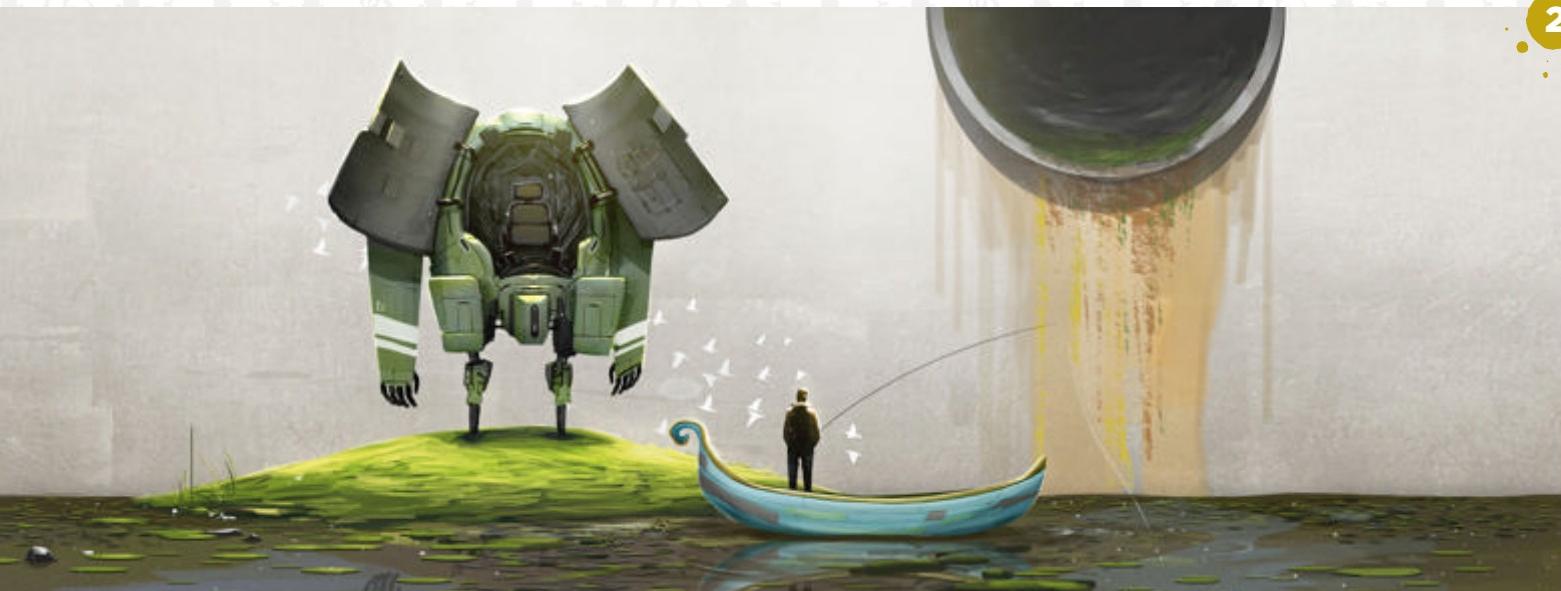


IMAGINEFX CRIT



"In Hometown Hero, Kenn's juxtaposition of a ticker-tape welcome and a complete absence of crowds makes for an atmospheric, compelling image. You can almost hear the hero's ride swoop through the empty city."

Daniel Vincent,
Art Editor



3

Kenn Yap
LOCATION: Singapore
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MEDIA: Photoshop, ZBrush



At the age of 17, Kenn moved from his home town of Kuala Lumpur to Singapore to pursue his love of art. Now he freelances as a concept artist and illustrator, specialising in sci-fi and fantasy art.

"I find it difficult to describe my own style, much in the same way that it's difficult to describe one's own handwriting," Kenn admits. "Rather, I try to distinguish myself in how I approach a piece as opposed to my technique. My main focus is always to tell a compelling story regardless of subject matter and style. As for subject matter, I'm always trying to find new influences."



TAP FOR GALLERY

Kenn Yap



1

HOMETOWN HERO "I tried to capture the scale of the city in this painting. The old school sci-fi influences in this painting definitely show through. Here, the hero of the adventure is returning home to a celebration of empty buildings."



DOWNTIME "There's something about subdued settings that I find compelling. I wanted to do a mech painting with more character to it – one that wasn't about combat. I was keen to portray the relationship between a mech and its pilot."



CMYK "What started as a portrait exercise quickly became this. It was my first time that I'd painted a face to this level of realism. I was caught up in the character and got carried away! The idea of human augmentation and wearable tech fascinates me, and it's very apparent in my designs."

Gonçalo Marques

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MEDIA: Photoshop



Having grown in a rural setting, the pencil has been Gonçalo's best friend since childhood. It was in 2006, when he came across Bob Rafei and his Jack and Daxter concept art, that he decided he wanted to become an artist.

At the moment Gonçalo's finishing his visual arts and multimedia course. He says he's building on his skills every day in hope of getting into the illustration and concept art industry. "My illustrations have loose and sketchy lines, with a subtle storytelling touch of fantasy and sci-fi, but I like to ground them with familiar and mundane objects, to give them realism," he says.

TAP FOR GALLERY

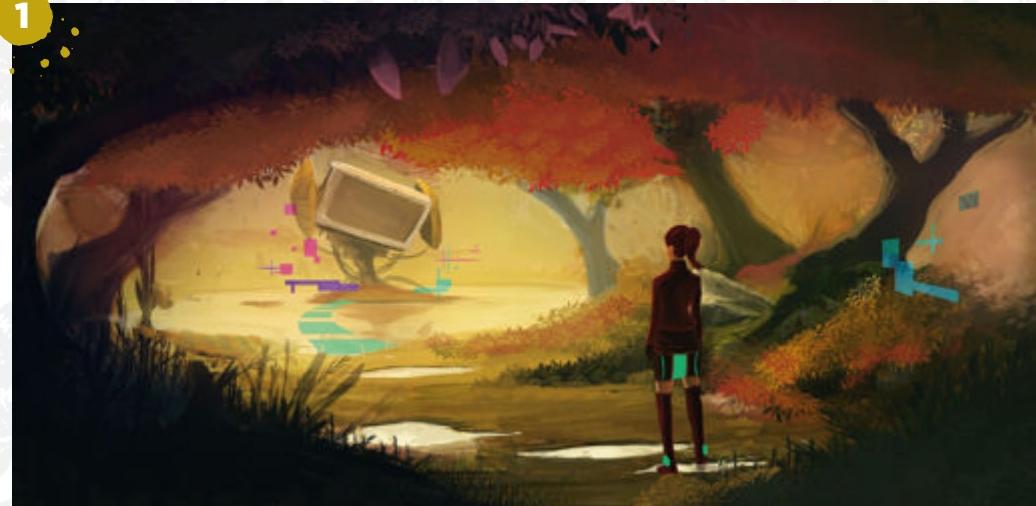
Gonçalo Marques

1 IT LIES DEEP WITHIN "I'm fond of this concept of an advanced and forgotten ruin in a forest. In this case, the computer is still functional and it'll react to threats; the girl has to shut it off to escape from the forest. It's a piece created for an indie game."

2 TAMING CURIOSITY "This piece was done for school. I wanted to make a big, mysterious and threatening monster in the deep forest that would be part of some abandoned junkyard. Here, the creature has encountered a human for the first time."

3 FLOW "I'm a big fan of Guild Wars 2 and Kekai Kotaki, so this Asura fan art was inevitable. She's an elementalist who's forming a ball of water for protection in a hot, dry environment. It's one of the best examples of the sketchy and loose lines I work with."

1



2



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Gonçalo's loose and sketchy style certainly works well in his Flow image, because it gives the art an extra boost of movement and energy. Something that a slick and fully rendered version might lack."

Alice Pattillo,
Staff Writer

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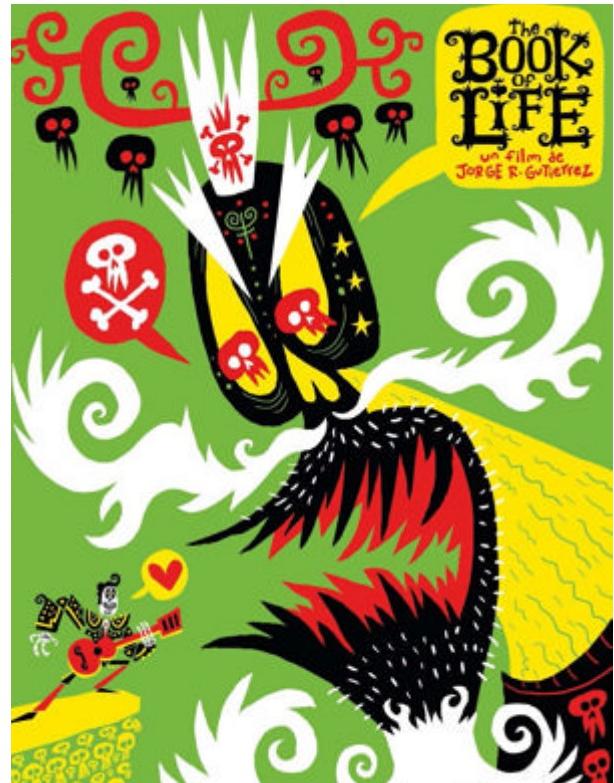
ARTIST NEWS, SOFTWARE & EVENTS

ImagineNation

AT THE CORE OF THE DIGITAL ART COMMUNITY



Two pieces of art from the film *The Book of Life*, directed by Jorge R Gutiérrez, who says, "One must learn to work well with others. Don't be a jerk!"



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From

illustration to animation

Make a move Want to bring your art to life? We asked six industry pros what it takes to leap into animation...



Ronnie del Carmen's influences include Bill Peet, Ollie Johnston and legendary Disney concept artist Mary Blair.

Many artists think about breathing life into their illustrations. But if you're deadly serious about making the move into movement, there are a few things that you need to know.

First, the good news. Rather than a hindrance, an illustration background is a great advantage getting into animation. A grasp of anatomy, composition, colour theory and lighting – it can only be a positive thing. Truth be told, a background in any creative field will be helpful to pool experience and ideas from.

"Extremely strong drawing and/or painting skills are essential," according to former Disney vis-dev and founder of The Oatley Academy, Chris Oatley. As well as:



"An encyclopedic knowledge of film and animation. Good awareness of literature, history and music. The ability to take art direction, clockwork dependability and finally, the ability to be a good friend."

Artist and animator Hollie Mengert explains that illustration has enriched her work as an animator. "Things like composition and mood in illustration can



help you compose a compelling character shot as an animator," she says.

"Illustrations can carry over nicely to animation. If you're



A WINNING CARD HAND

Imaginary Games took inspiration from the Mexican holiday Day of the Dead when it designed a new mobile card game. The result is marvellously macabre!

Page 25



ALL THE HOME COMFORTS

Fred Augis has set up his art studio in his living room, which means he's never too far away from his collection of art books and a long coffee.

Page 26



FRIENDS UNITED

Read how the art community rallied around Allen Williams, using the Gate of Fire campaign to raise money for his carcinoma treatment.

Page 29



Chris Oately believes an animator needs strong drawing and painting skills – although Genndy Tartakovsky might disagree with him.

“Composition and mood in illustration can help you compose a strong character shot as an animator”

thinking in terms of strong silhouette and character motivation in your illustrations, then the only thing you'll need to do in animation is figure out your next key frames."

Hollie uses illustration as a guide to her animated work. "One especially valuable thing that has helped me transition is to think of my 3D key frames as drawings. Then you begin to see each pose as a piece on its own, which makes it much more familiar to illustration."

ONCE UPON A TIME...

Stories are the essence of art. Whether you just paint portraits or have a love of sequential art, there's always a story to tell with your illustrations.

Ronnie del Carmen has been at Pixar for 15 years, working on award-winning animations such as Finding Nemo and Up. He says a passion for

Genndy Tartakovsky's original sketches for Dracula, and how he finally appeared in Hotel Transylvania. The sequel goes on release in September.



INDUSTRY INSIGHT

GENNDY TARTAKOVSKY

The Hotel Transylvania director passes on his advice...

...on what makes a good CG animator

What I've noticed in CG animators is that if they can draw, or if they have an understanding of drawing and the sensibilities of drawing, then they're good CG animators. The ones who know the computer well but don't have the foundations – especially for the way I want my films to be animated, which is from a 2D aesthetic – they struggle. And I think, "Okay, you're just puppeteering, rather than really drawing in the computer."

...on capturing a performance

I'm not a great draftsman, but I have a knack for posing and animation, and the two definitely go hand in hand. I see some people who are great animators, but their drawings aren't as strong, and vice versa where some people are amazing drafts-people, but their animation understanding – which is a performance of sorts – isn't at the same level.

...on fleshing out the visuals

As I animate or draw it's always "Ka-boosh!" when drawing action. Music also helps a lot: obviously, music has a great natural rhythm, so I try to follow it. When we're coming up with characters we do a voice: "Maybe it could have something like this high-pitched squeak?" and then you pitch it with that idea. You try to flesh out the visual with all the tools you have, and audio's a huge tool that we use and embrace.

...on his own work ethic

I try to keep my point of view as pure as I can. It's all about that point of view – it's all I have – and so I try to create the purest vision I can deliver onto the screen.



Genndy worked in TV animation before directing 2012's *Hotel Transylvania* for Sony Pictures Animation.

www.sonypicturesanimation.com

» storytelling is key to making the transition. "It helped that my work had enough earmarks that suited animation. I like drawing characters and figures, and I like to stage for the camera and compose for lighting and acting," he says.

Ronnie is a fine arts graduate, who worked in advertising until his big break as a storyboard artist for *Batman: The Animated Series*. "Over time I learned that it was all about storytelling. Be a storyteller in all your images. Create characters and stages to reveal stories."

IT'S ALL IN THE MOVEMENT

Mexican animator Jorge R Gutiérrez agrees, saying, "Understanding of movement is essential – storytelling too."

Jorge freelanced as a digital illustrator before pitching his animation ideas, but he always knew it was his true passion.

As a tip on breaking into the animation industry, he recommends working well with others. "Animation is a very collaborative medium and it's important to understand this right from the start."

Chris whole-heartedly agrees with this. "The two prerequisites to a successful career in animation are: do great work and be great to work with," he says. "Focus on communicating your excellence in those two areas as consistently as possible. Freelancers have to work harder to network and keep the jobs coming in. Visual development artists have to do this too, but the jobs are often months or years at a time."

This may be something the average illustrator will need to work on, if they're seriously thinking about animation. "You just can't hide in your room and make pretty pictures," says Ronnie. "Illustration is a lone-wolf path – you rely on your own counsel and instincts. Animation is like being part of a ship. We're prepared to let go of cherished notions in place of better solutions."



Hollie Mengert illustrated books before making the transition into the animation industry.

Sam Burton is head of animation at Jelly London, and his client work includes Volvo.



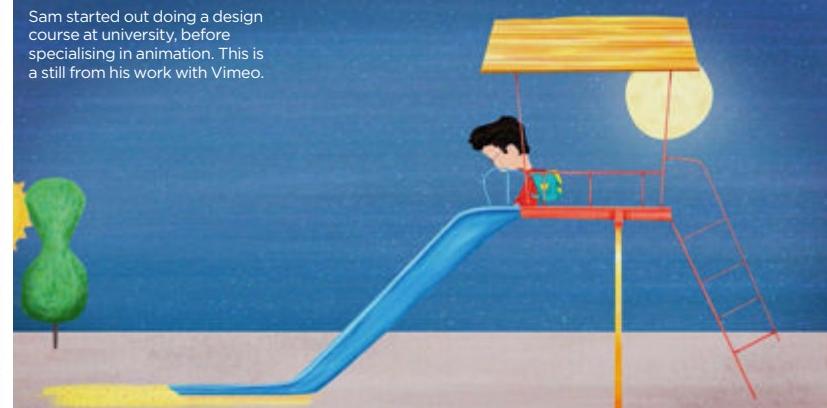
“People seem to think that with animation there’s a magic button you press to tell a character to walk...”

Something else to keep in mind is time. "Illustrators generally have more time and any changes can be dealt with fairly easily," says Sam Burton, head of animation at Jelly Kitchen. "People seem to think that with animation there's a magic button you press to tell a character to walk. They don't realise just how much time goes into it." Jorge agrees: "Animation can take a group months or years to complete. An illustration is usually done by one artist over a much shorter period of time."

DON'T AIM FOR PERFECTION

"There's not always time to perfect everything about your character, especially if you're dealing with 30 different poses to get one second of movement," offers Hollie. In this way, being an illustrator can help you

Sam started out doing a design course at university, before specialising in animation. This is a still from his work with Vimeo.



move into animation. "You may focus too much on making one piece of an animation pretty rather than focusing on how it's moving as a whole. You need to sometimes let go of the little details in animation."

"The main industry differences between illustration and animation are in the technical side," she adds. "You still want the appeal of an illustration, but you'll spend much more time getting the program to work with you, making sure things don't break, than you will in Photoshop or other illustration programs."

Ronnie suggests being adaptable and resilient are key – technology changes too fast to rely on mastering one software. "If your work is good using one program then likely you'll be good using another," he says. And as with illustration, it all comes down to producing great art. As Chris says, "When in doubt, draw!"

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PLUS!
Draw a biker beast in SketchBook Pro
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Claire Wendling's ethereal sketches

The cover of the magazine features a large, dynamic illustration of Spider-Man in his iconic red and blue suit, swinging through a city at night. He is shown in various stages of his swing, with motion lines and glowing energy effects around his hands. The background shows a city skyline with lit-up skyscrapers. The title 'COMIC ARTIST' is written in large, bold, white letters across the top. Below it, 'VOLUME 2' is visible. On the left side, there's a yellow circular badge with the text 'FREE DISC', '8 HOURS OF PRO VIDEO TUITION', and '+ 21 CUSTOM BRUSHES'. On the right side, another yellow circular badge says 'ON SALE IN TESCO, WHSMITH, BARNES & NOBLE AND MORE!'. In the bottom left corner, there's an illustration of Wonder Woman in her classic costume. The overall theme is vibrant and energetic, reflecting the comic book style.

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Game of the dead

Dark art Carnivalesque blends with digital game-play in Imaginary Games' new mobile card game

With the mobile collectible-card genre (CCG) thought by some to be saturated with similar titles, Imaginary Games wanted to try something new. Inspired by Mexican holiday, the Day of the Dead, the art of Afterland explores macabre, surreal and expressionistic themes.

"We will demonstrate that an entertainment fantasy of flawed characters with strong females will connect with a broad audience," says Imaginary co-founder Chris Powell, "and disrupt and change the rigid gaming establishment."

A tall order for a mobile game. But Imaginary Games' innovation has garnered acclaim, notably winning co-founder Elin Jonsson Indie Prize Showcase's Most Prominent Female Developer award.

Elin and Chris, together with Sarita Kolhatkar, created the atmospheric character art. Chris hopes the themes of social rejection and acceptance will attract a new audience, specifically gothic subculture.

Afterland is available to download for free from 1 August, and you can find out more information at www.imaginarygames.ca.



Characters include Plaguemen, living masks that seem to be part of their sinister host.



Game mechanics are explained by a narrative between Horus and Star.



The Uncannies Inhabit Afterland's Uncanny Valley: these marionettes reflect an obsession with physical beauty.

The lovable Burnies were once spirits in an enchanted forest. Until they burnt it down.



My sketchbooks from the past few years contain many studies and miscellaneous drawings. I remember doing a lot of concepts when I went to Paris on the TGV (high-speed train) for Dontnod Entertainment.



On this and the adjacent shelf is a collection of old cameras, which includes the Asahi Pentax you can see here.



This is a Mega Bloks spaceship that I made with my son. I simply wanted to decorate my desk.

My young son's first drawings, with many original compositions of lines and stains!

This little bronze statue was made by my father. I saw it throughout my youth and it's nice to have it on show.

Fred Augis

Home comforts Technology sits alongside traditional tools in the French concept artist's cosy, living-room studio space



My office is in my flat, near the centre of Rennes, north-west France. It's a very calm part of the city: I can see an old church from my window and have far-reaching views of the roofs of the houses in my district.

I separated off my living room with a big bookcase that I've filled with artbooks and personal objects. My workspace is uncluttered and small, but comfortable. This means I can concentrate on my projects, yet

still have some items within easy reach to help inspire me in my work.

I use my old Cintiq 21UX to create concept art, because I prefer to draw to a 3/4 ratio when working on a new character design, rather than using a widescreen device. My second screen is helpful for displaying references. My workstation is a loyal, seven-year-old PC. I'm not a hardcore gamer so I don't have a modern graphics card fitted in it – it's just powerful enough to handle Hotline Miami and run Photoshop.

On an average work day, I'll begin with a long coffee and check my email, the news and things on the web. After that I try to organise all the work I want to do that day, keeping in mind my client's deadlines.

In the beginning, I found it difficult to collaborate with international studios. I was accustomed to working closely with French game studios and I wanted to match my hours with them. When feedback comes at 1am or 5am, it isn't a good balance for me or my family.

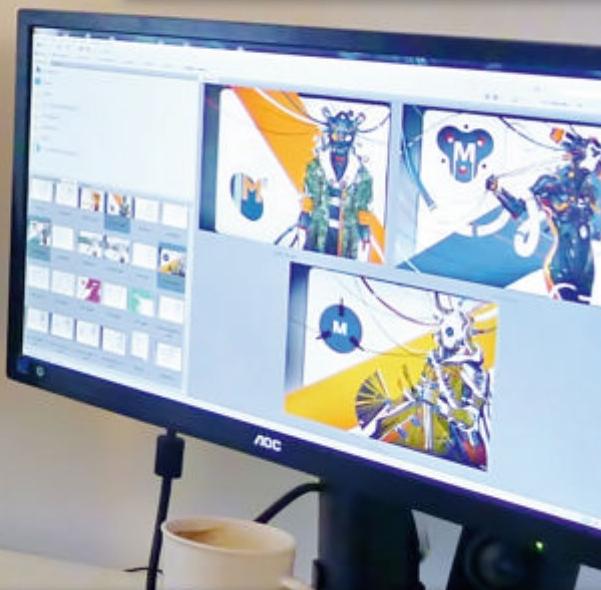
Artist news, software & events

I like to keep some inspirational items close by, including the portfolio of Philippe Druillet, a book on the art of Raymond Lemstra and a Kent Williams drawing.

It's essential for me to see my art, to ensure a project is coherent, so I use this white space as my concept wall.



I installed a telescopic arm for my tablet because the original support didn't offer a comfortable position for long periods of work. It's one of my best investments.



The framed artwork is an environment piece that was done by my grandfather. On the right is a test print of an image of mine that looks better than it did on-screen.



I bought a long desk so I can have a little space to draw in my sketchbook. I can easily scan my drawings and do a paint-over in Photoshop. I prefer making pictures with a black line on paper to using my tablet. I find that my perception and concentration levels aren't the same using these two media.

My studio is nice, but I'm thinking about getting an art space that's better suited to my traditional drawing and painting work.

Fred is a freelance concept artist. You can see his work at www.fredaugis.tumblr.com.

Just some of the art books I keep within easy reach. Eagle-eyed readers might also spot the collector's edition of Hotline Miami 2!



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Hatboy
by Vaughn Pinpin



We'll be there for you

Community spirit How fantasy artists have come together to raise money for one of their own, via the Gate of Fire initiative

Allen Williams
worked on Guillermo
del Toro's 2013 film
Pacific Rim.



Muddy Colors is a fantasy art blog that showcases original artwork and articles to the community. Artist and blog contributor Arnie Fenner recently featured a very important cause on the site: friend and artist Allen Williams is suffering from HPV-related squamous cell carcinoma.

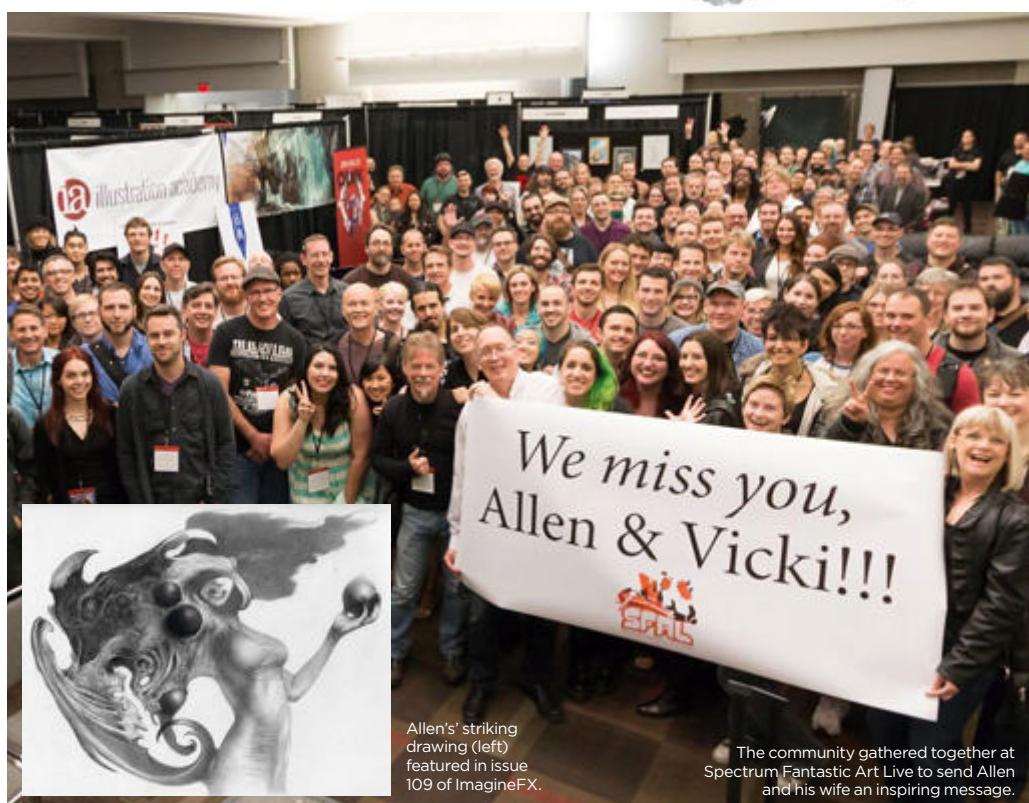
Another artist, Iain McCaig - along with Karla Ortiz, and Christian and Andrea Alzmann - has set up the Gate of Fire fund to raise money for treatment.

"As an artist and human being, Allen is beloved. He's given so much of his art, inspiration, friendship and time to us all.

Let's return the favour and help him now he and his family need it most," says Iain.

"I've just returned from Spectrum Fantastic Art Live, but one of us was notably missing this year. At the end of the first day, artists filled the floor to send a photo message to Allen and his wife, Vicki. It's a message for everyone in our phantasmagorical community, that no matter what demons you're fighting, we are there too. You are not alone."

With \$40,000 raised, more is needed. You can donate at <http://ifxm.ag/gateoffire>.



Letters

YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, **Claire Howlett**, on craig@imaginefx.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA, UK



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Game changer

I just want to congratulate you all on delivering such amazing artwork and helpful features as you do. I was more into fan art for so long, mostly comic-style super hero stuff to begin with, but then I picked up a copy of the Game of Thrones issue from last year, and I haven't looked back.

My whole approach to art has changed completely. Where before it was blocky, thick-lined comic doodles,

I'm fully on a quest to learn to paint digitally. I've even set up a new deviantART account, because I've realised my work is now so different it seems like a different artist altogether. But it really has to be said that it's thanks to you all for the huge levels of inspiration I find in every issue. I would likely be still drawing the same generic doodles instead of the detailed stuff I'm working on now.

Neil Gardiner, via email



Issue 108 provided Neil with the inspiration he needed to start painting digitally.

Claire replies Neil, it's our pleasure. We're glad to have helped you get inspired. I just wish you had supplied your deviantART page so we could see your work. Thanks so much for writing in.

More paint tools!

First off, thank you for such beautiful, inspiring and helpful magazine! So far I'm only a hobbyist artist and focusing more on 3D modelling, with the aim of working in the video game design industry. The magazine has been a great inspiration to me and has given me helpful tips.

Second, I'm sorry if this has been requested before or has been featured in an earlier issue, but I was hoping if you'd find someone who works with Paint Tool SAI and could put together a workshop for us readers. I know the internet is full of tutorials, but a workshop from a professional would be great.



DID YOU MISS THE FREE POSTER ART?

Turn to page 48 for more details on our brilliant pin-up issue and others, too!



Teemu says Photoshop's high cost is a good reason to feature more Paint Tool SAI articles in the magazine.

I ask because while the newest Photoshop is good for digital painting, it's very expensive. And while Photoshop CS2 is free nowadays, it's lacking in the digital painting department compared to CS5 and CS6. Paint Tool SAI costs only around 40 Euros (about \$42), and is far more budget-friendly for those who want to explore and hone their digital art skills. And they can use Photoshop CS2 alongside it!

I'm just starting out exploring the software and haven't done that many pieces yet, so any guidance on using Paint Tool SAI would be very welcome.

Teemu "TSA" Anttila, via email

Claire replies Teemu, we've had a few workshops on Paint Tool SAI in the past and some of them will be featuring in our Manga Artist special edition, which comes out on 12 June. You can find out more about our special editions here: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk. There's also a plethora of new, cheaper art software tools on the market, such as Pixelmator, Krita and Mischief that are giving Photoshop a run for its money. We'll be featuring workshops on these tools in upcoming issues of ImagineFX. Turn to page 93 to see our review on Pixelmator.

Request for caricatures

Why do you never have an issue about cartoons and caricatures? They're not as easy to do as they look, right? Also, I don't own a suitable electronic reading device yet (I intend to get one in the autumn), but why don't you offer more digital back issues?

Kris, via email

Claire replies Kris, you're right – we haven't really focused on cartoon and caricatures thus far. I'm not sure if these topics are worthy of an entire issue (unless readers, you wish to email in to tell me otherwise!) but I'll look into featuring guidance on caricatures in a future edition.

As for the lack of digital back issues, it would take us quite a lot of time and resource to make these older editions available as back issues, and we're just not sure there's enough demand for it.



Your art news that's grabbed our attention



Ryan Christensen
@RyanCDigital



"Mud, dust and more experimenting.
#Illustration #conceptart
#Military"



Glen Stone
@gstone78



"Batman page I wrote & illustrated in @manga studio with their fantastic inking brushes..."



Grey
@GreyRadian



"Finally painted some MGS fan art!"



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Artist Q&A

STRUGGLING WITH A PAINTING TECHNIQUE OR TOPIC? EMAIL **HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM** TODAY!



See page 6 now!

The NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX panel

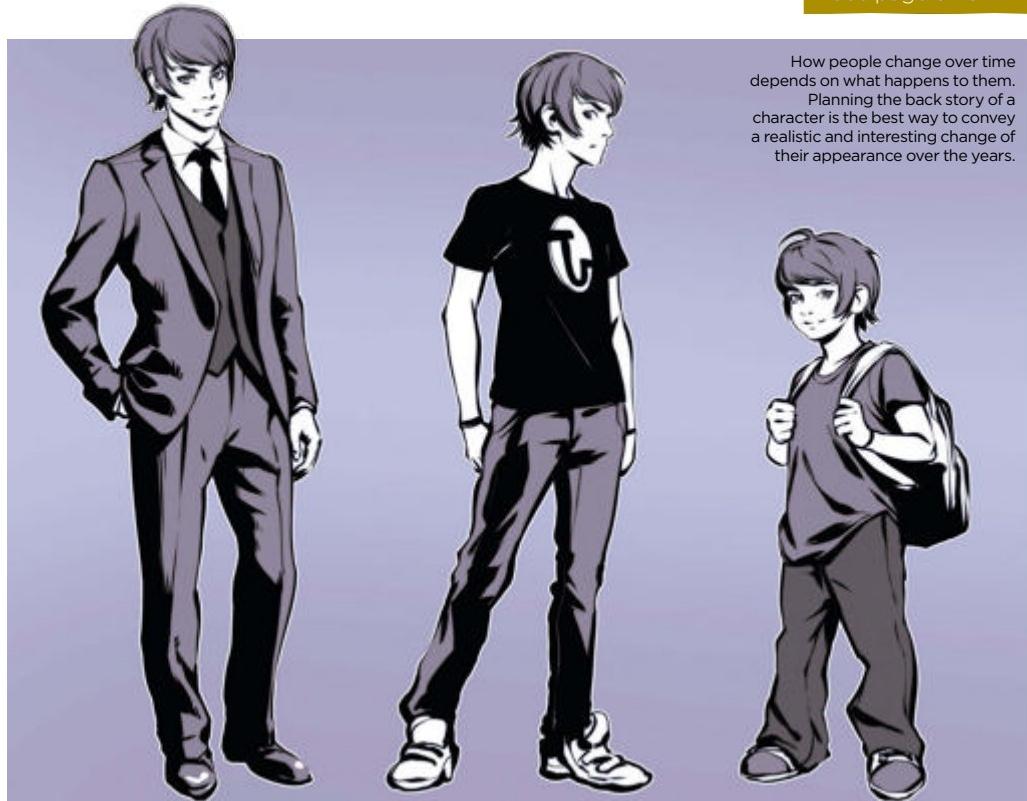
Donglu Yu
A senior concept artist at Warner Brothers Games Montréal, Donglu has worked on several Assassin's Creeds, Far Cry 4 and Deus Ex: Human Revolution.
<http://artofdonglu.wix.com/home>

Nick Harris
English artist Nick switched to a digital canvas in 2000 after 18 years using traditional media. Most of his work involve creating artwork for children's books.
www.nickillus.com

Ilya Kuvshinov
Ilya is a Russian freelance illustrator and comic artist who's currently living in Yokohama, Japan. He's a fan of capturing the female form in his art.
<http://ifxm.ag/ilyak>

Mark Molnar
Mark is a concept and visual development artist for the entertainment industry and currently doing work for international film, game and animation companies.
www.markmolnar.com

Tony Foti
Tony is a freelance illustrator who regularly contributes to Dungeons & Dragons and Fantasy Flight Games' Star Wars, The Lord of the Rings, and Call of Cthulhu lines.
www.tonyfotia.com



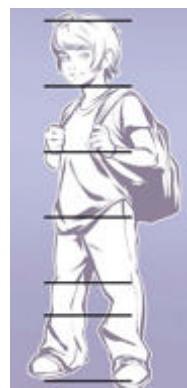
How people change over time depends on what happens to them. Planning the back story of a character is the best way to convey a realistic and interesting change of their appearance over the years.

Question
How can I depict the same character at different ages?
Jacinda Hind, US

Answer
Ilya replies

The most difficult aspect of this challenge is achieving a balance between character recognition and visible age-related changes. In other words, the character's appearance has to alter while remaining recognisably themselves. For art mediums whose main focus is the story, such as comics or films, the recognition element is slightly more important, so I usually sacrifice significant changes in the style and appearance of a character's ageing process, in favour of added viewer recognition.

The best way to deal with changes in appearance of the character is to base them on their back story. But in addition to



Proportion is the first thing to catch a viewer's attention in determining a character's age.

taking a character story arc into account, such as those that affect their appearance and demeanour – for example, the death of a loved one or going to war – there are also changes that affects humans physically as they grow up. These can include going through puberty, which can turn younger, benign characters insolent, angry or rebellious; and increased physical activity without the associated coordination, resulting in minor physical injuries during childhood. A change in a character's social status can also affect their appearance.

In summary, try to take a holistic approach to your character designs – your audience will hopefully appreciate you going the extra mile.

Artist Q&A Need our advice?

Email help@imaginefx.com with your art questions and we'll provide all the answers!

Step-by-step: Show a recognisable character ageing



1 I usually start with the middle stage, which is often adolescence. Consider thin, long limbs, dissatisfaction, a grumpy expression, as well as personal preferences in clothing as the character can afford to buy things for himself. From the adolescent stage, you can easily turn your character to a child or adult.



2 When the character's a child, eye shape and eyebrow thickness are about the same, but ear and nose size are altered. I don't change his hairstyle, in favour of recognition. The character smiles and enjoys a care-free childhood. His parents buy him oversized clothes and he's less concerned about his appearance.



3 My teen becomes an adult. Shoulders and chest broaden, he's taller, has shorter hair and facial proportions change subtly. My character wears a jacket and exudes confidence, but his pose exhibits frivolity from his teens. Glasses and beard might depict changes linked to age and status. But this character won't like that!

Question

Please help me depict a character who's been turned to stone.

JD Blackwell, US

Creating a creature that's been turned to stone isn't just about painting a realistic texture, but also integrating your character into its surroundings naturally.



Answer

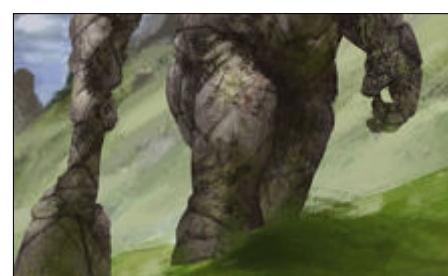
Mark replies



To paint realistic natural materials such as stone the key isn't just to show the basic structure and surface texture, but also an object's age and how it fits into the surroundings. Think through what's happening with boulders, and study natural rock formations. You can add more details by ageing the material: creating cracks, painting on signs of weathering, adding extra colours to depict mould, moss and marks.

To answer this question I'll create a giant who was turned into stone hundreds of years ago. I start with a simple, easily recognisable silhouette. After blocking in the background and deciding on the light source, I paint in the main lights and shadows inside my silhouette to establish the creature's overall form. I keep adding textures using custom brushes.

It's important to vary your brushes, trying to emulate nature. Use random spots for mould,



I always try to block in the main material with various texture brushes in the first phase, and then add some ageing, wear and additional colours.

grainy brushes for moss, and palette-knife-like brushes for hard and rough surface qualities.

I add details until I'm satisfied, and I start to integrate the figure with its surroundings. I add bounce lights on the lower part of the body, and extra moss and grass on upward-facing surfaces where the creature merges into the ground plane.

After this the image just needs some finishing touches, colour adjustments and a scale reference with the human hiker figure, which also serves to add extra storytelling to the piece.



ImagineNation Artist Q&A



Question

I want to paint a scene with a low eye level – any tips?

Sandra Cooke, England

Answer

Nick replies

 Creating a low eye-level image can be great fun, just as a high one can. The main thing I think about when tackling the scene is that the same general rules of perspective apply as for other compositions.

So, objects appear smaller the further you are from them. Lines appear to converge, so that tall buildings seen from ground level may appear to be leaning together. This is a visual trick of course, just as the rules of perspective are. You'll find that the distortion around the edges of a scene with an extreme low eye-level will tend to look unnatural. This is acceptable if that's what you're after, but you do need to be aware of the limitations of what you can get away with.

Let's go all fairy tale and paint a giant, from ground level. I sketch out our lofty one first and even have him leaning back slightly in a stomping pose. This introduces some foreshortening and overlapping forms. All that means is that shapes nearer the viewer partially obscure the ones behind, like a tennis ball in front of a football for example.

Our giant's foot is closest to the viewer and so it seems large compared to his leg, which also appears shorter than if viewed square on and has diminishing proportions. In turn, his torso is proportionally smaller again and so on, all the way up to his head. And you can't see his neck at all – that's some foreshortening for you!



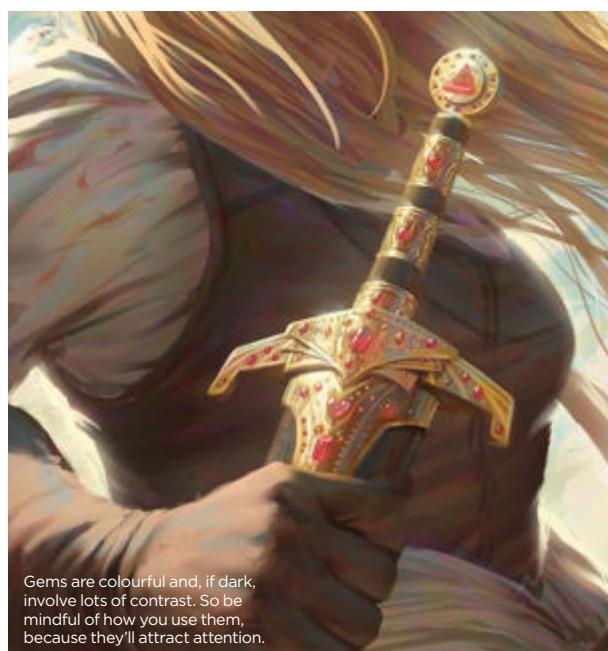
Perspective rules are crucial for implying a low eye-level. Haze makes distant things appear fainter and less distinct.



 **Artist's secret**

KEEPING PERSPECTIVE

You'll hear this again and again, but it's true. It really pays to always have a second window version of your complete image open while you work on details, to keep you aware of the overall composition.



Gems are colourful and, if dark, involve lots of contrast. So be mindful of how you use them, because they'll attract attention.

Question

Can you help me create realistic, shimmering jewels?

Brandy Stenner, US

Answer

Tony replies

 Painting jewels can seem tricky, but once you understand how they interact with light it gets easier. First, though, you need to design their shape and placement. Gems and jewels are generally functionless and used for decoration, so take time to design an aesthetically pleasing layout.

For the shapes, I suggest doing some research. There are a handful of stone cuts used most often (round, oval, triangle, pear, heart, princess and so on), but with a little research you can find hundreds of shapes that may suit your image better

(I recommend looking up a 'whirl cut'). Consider using the Lasso tool when painting your initial shapes, because if you bungle the hard edges the stones will feel soft and mushy.

The steps I'm using remain the same no matter what colour gem you're painting, but I suggest keeping the saturation high. Anything that's clear and colourful will absorb light, which means its local colour will be as saturated as possible. It's easy to cut down on saturation towards the end if things are too bright, but adding colour to a dull painting can be a lot of work.



Question

What techniques can I use to give a scene greater impact?

Adam Rothwell, Canada

Answer

Mark replies



I work a lot in early pitch development for films and games, where it's important to create striking images that can also tell the story or describe a scene. The key is to handle my focal areas clearly and build up compositions based on the story that I want to tell.

Even in a simpler composition such as this image, where I wanted to show only the main creature attacking, I can use elements of the composition to make my image more effective. In this case I've not only used compositional elements from the background to emphasise my framing, I've also posed the creature to create a dynamic line pointing towards my focal point: the creature's head and mouth.

There are some basic guidelines I try to use in most of my pieces. Using the Rule of Thirds and the Golden Ratio for placing your focal point helps, but try to keep the image as uncluttered as possible after doing so. Use the perspective of the background and your vanishing points to direct the viewer towards your focal point or drive the story. Apply dynamic lines and compositional elements. Use extra framing to stop the viewer's eye from wandering to less-important areas.

I use the same principles in more complex images as well, only I have more elements to play with so I can plan the path of the viewer's eye more clearly.



Use elements to direct, or block, the path of the viewer's eye. Point your elements towards your focal area with dynamic lines and perspective (1) and block the flow of view with parallel lines, to direct it back from wandering away (2).

In creating cinematic key art you have to use the whole composition. Frame it to consciously direct the viewer's eye and tell your story in the best possible way.



Artist's secret

CONTRAST IS THE KEY!



You can direct the viewer's attention towards your focal area more by putting extra contrast there. You can do this with colour or value contrast, but the best strategy is to use both and apply some extra detailing and texturing.

Step-by-step: Three kinds of jewellery lighting effects



- 1 Once you've nailed down the shape and design of your jewels in flat colour, it's time to add light. Use a soft, round brush to paint in the absorbed light. It's like a soft glow that emanates from the middle of the jewel. Paint it first because the highlights always go over it.



- 2 Next up are the subsurface highlights. Gemstones are translucent, so you can see beneath the surface to the gem cuts and the object they're embedded in. When light passes through and hits the surface on the other side, you get highlights in a colour similar to your stone.



- 3 The regular highlights are more straightforward. As always, the highlight will fall on the precise point where your line of sight would bounce up to the light source, as if it were a pen laser. These highlights will be in the colour of the light source.

ImagineNation Artist Q&A

Question

How do professional artists use 'photobashing' in their work?

Khushi Dyal, Canada

Answer

Donglu replies

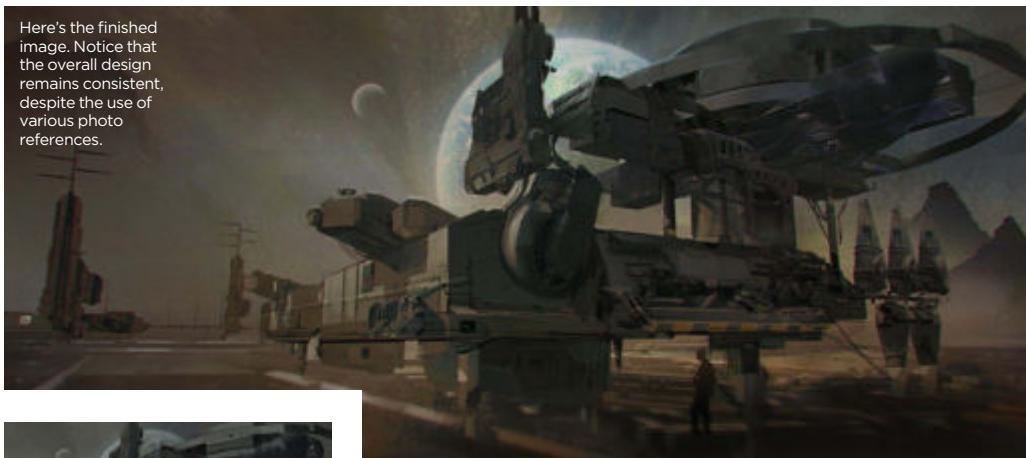


For digital paintings that deal with mechanical subject matters, the photobashing technique has grown in popularity. There's nothing wrong with this method, as long as you don't run into copyright issues with the photos you use.

In a real production context, we use all sorts of methods to speed up the creation process, including pasting photos directly into our paintings. However, this method can often create inconsistency in the design, and artists have a tendency to over-detail the image with small pieces of photos. So instead of just pasting random photos together, think more about the process.

I like to start with some basic volumes in SketchUp to search for the right design language and composition. Once I'm satisfied with the basic block-out, I export the image into Photoshop to start the photobashing process. The trick is to select a limited range of photos to use – otherwise, the painting will explode with different shapes and design aesthetics. So, in short, I create a 3D base, gather photo reference from a limited range of design languages, and then gather references for my colour palette and lighting.

Here's the finished image. Notice that the overall design remains consistent, despite the use of various photo references.



Once the photobashing process is completed, I apply some loose painting strokes to blend everything together so the final image has a more natural feeling to it.



Artist's secret

SHOOTING PHOTO REFERENCE

Try to do your own photo shoot for your photobashing library. It's important to take a lot of shots of the same object from different camera angles, such as long shots, medium shots and close-ups. It can give much more freedom as well as visual consistency to the photobashing process.

Step-by-step: Effective photobashing techniques



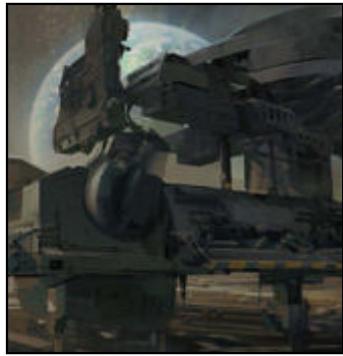
1 A 3D layout is ideally suited for the initial blocking out: it enables you to play with different lenses and compositions within minutes. I take this blocking into Photoshop and establish my basic colour palette and the lighting by painting loosely over my image. I use the shadow information on the 3D blocking as masks, so that the volumes are easy to interpret.



2 Next, I gather some photo reference for photobashing, and colour and lighting inspiration. Looking at my basic blocking, I see that I'll need mostly cubic and spherical volumes. Some extra mechanical details will help me to bash details too. I look for backlit compositions for the lighting references, where I have to pay more attention to my silhouettes.



3 I cut out the piece that you need for the block-in. Because the perspective is already laid out with the 3D base, I simply follow the lines on the basic layer. I tweak the lighting of the photos as I paste them in – they won't always be consistent with the lighting choice of the painting. Here, I try out some simple lighting setups in Sketchup that give me some inspiration.

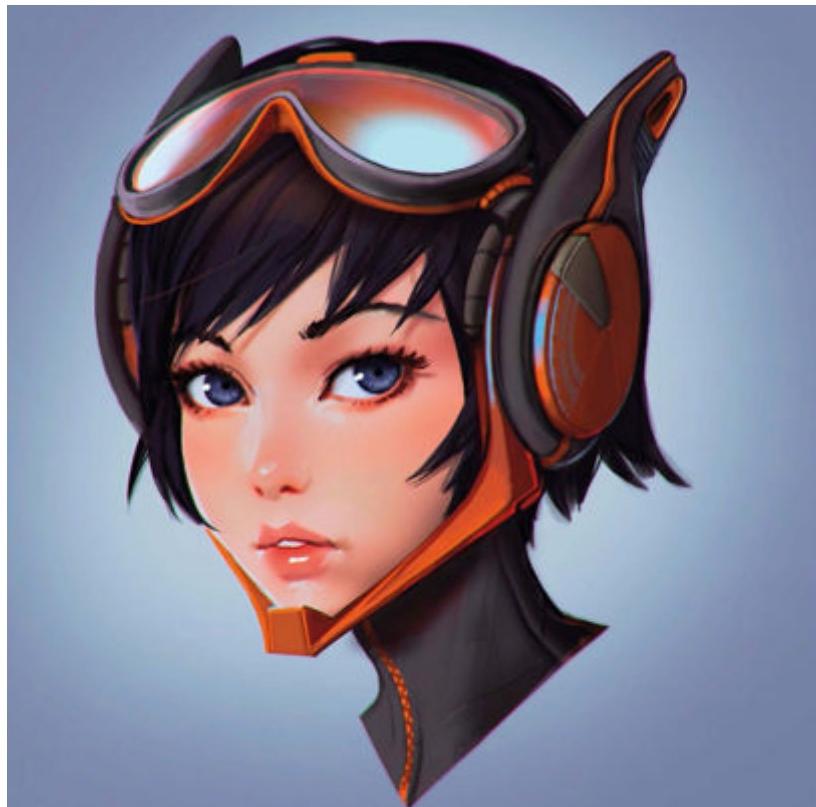


4 Don't forget the art fundamentals while photobashing. Check your value relationships, your compositions, and the visual balance/rhythm to make sure that you have an interesting focal point and also that you have places where viewers can rest their eyes. Some artists choose to leave a clear trace of the photos, but I prefer to paint over them very slightly.

Question

What tips do you have for designing a futuristic headgear for my character?

Rob Varney, Canada



Answer

Ilya replies



I believe that an interesting and believable design must also look functional. Here, I decide that my character wears this headgear when taking part in futuristic races, so it must feature headphones, a microphone and goggles. Doing this background work will help to put the scope of the design within a defined framework, and enable me to focus on its functionality.

After painting a girl's head, I outline the main forms and elements of the headgear. The microphone is built into the jaw element, while the headphones, in addition to enabling communication and acting as a built-in antenna, is also responsible for raising and lowering the goggles. I avoid

depicting wires, reasoning that an internal battery would make for a streamlined profile. I imagine that the races don't last long and so the battery can be quite small.

This headgear is designed for the mass market, perhaps specifically for female navigators, so I decided to avoid sharp corners, working instead with smoother forms. All my materials have a matte finish.

I decide to use a two-colour palette, which is typical for the design of racing cars. However, I choose to construct the headgear from a range of materials: aluminium alloys on the ears and in the goggles, plastic in the chin and ear's technical elements, as well as rubber and glass in her goggles.



It's important to think about how moving parts interact with fixed parts: in this instance I decide on the functional and resting positions of the goggles.



Photoshop's Color Burn layer blending mode is handy for depicting realistic shadows. Just use your favourite Airbrush with a light grey colour over your normal layers, with the initial material colours on them.

Question

My medieval dungeon scene needs lighting. Can you help?

Elsbeth Hoffman, England



Since both your main light source (brazier) and the accent lights (torches) are using fire, the only colours you'll see in the room are fire colours.

Answer

Tony replies



Dungeons were initially built in towers, but those areas became used for living quarters (for the same reason the prisons were initially there: security) and the dungeons were moved to the underground levels. This means they're too low for windows and generally the shabbiest place in the castle.

Without sunlight, we're left with artificial forms of lighting. Without electricity, that means fire. Candles were a common way of illuminating rooms during the medieval period, along with oil lamps, torches and braziers (fire pits). Since we don't want a dungeon to feel inviting, I suggest torches and a brazier.

Firelight has a high drop-off rate, meaning it doesn't travel far. Each torch and brazier will give off light in all directions equally, and the amount of light is proportional to the size of the flame. If you look up some reference, you'll see that small torches leave an obvious circle of light on the wall, which you can use to get an idea of how far their light stretches. The brazier works as more of a fill light, and is responsible for most of the illumination in this setup.



Start by painting the dungeon with a little low, ambient light (the bounce light from the brazier). This helps keep things organised as you plan your lighting.

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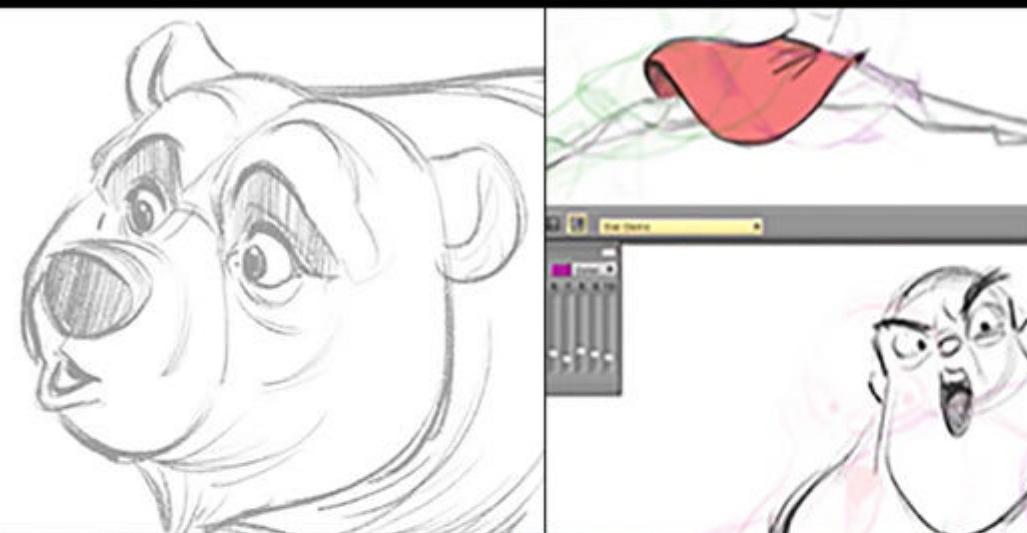
Learn from master animator & director Aaron Blaise ("The Lion King", "Beauty and the Beast", "Mulan", co-director "Brother Bear") as he teaches key principles of animation.



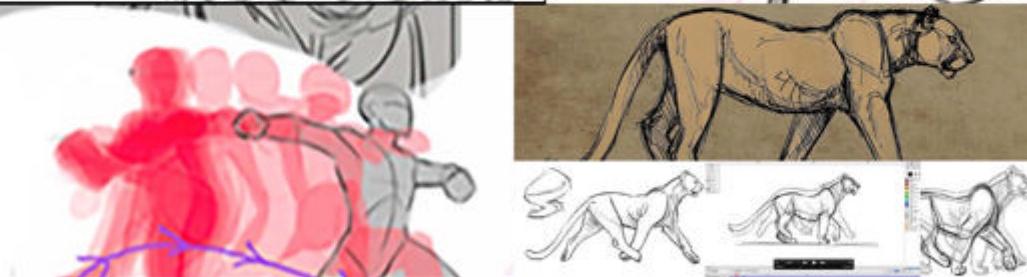
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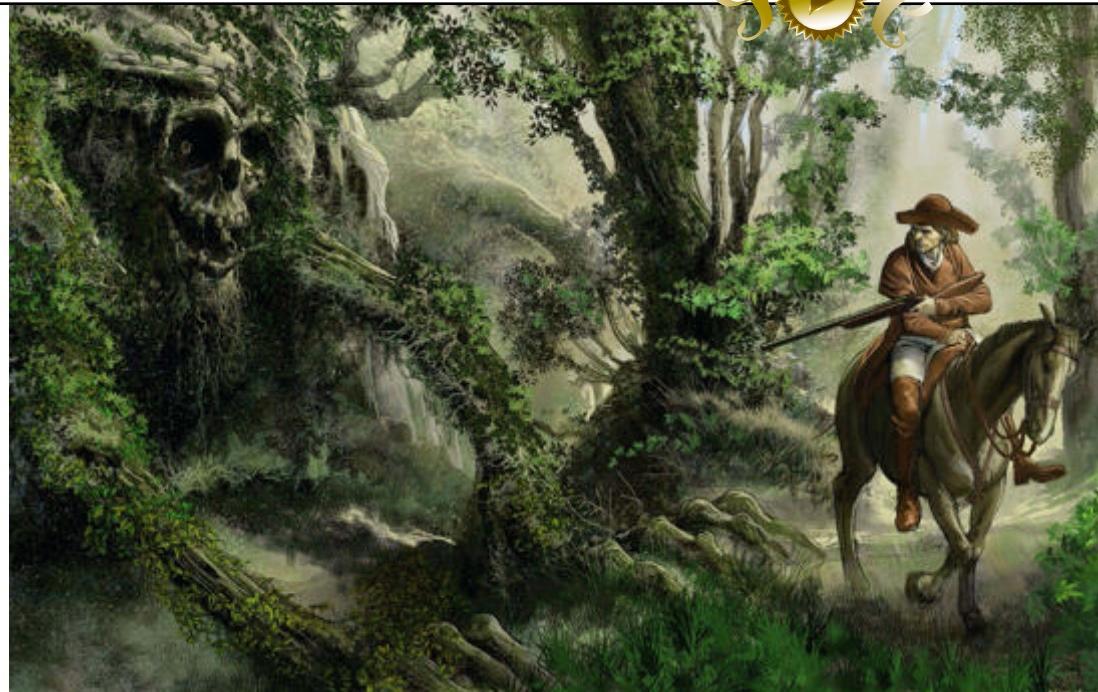
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Question

Do you have any advice for creating an anthropomorphic landscape?

Donald Cottle, US



The first two things you need to think about are what exactly is the character form and the environment you're setting it in. Keep it simple to start with.

Once you have your forms worked out, you can have loads of fun embellishing them and disguising them with elements pertinent to your landscape.

**Answer**

Nick replies



These kind of effects can range from the very obvious and dramatic, to the almost impossible to spot at first. The examples that immediately pop into my head are Skull Island, as represented in various versions of King Kong, and the stone giant in the second Hellboy film.

The first thing to decide is what you actually wish to portray and its scale. The latter is important, because the elements making up the feature need to fit in and

offer valuable clues for the viewer as to the size of the object. You need to settle upon what the form is, how big it's going to be and what sort of landscape it's going to be a part of. Mountains and forest (rocks and trees) represent great building materials, as in the real world, but without the processing of our human building techniques.

You should also think about what visual impact do you want to make? I like the surprise angle, wherein you don't necessarily realise what you're looking at

straight away. I love that giant in the Hellboy example, which at first encounter resembles rocks randomly strewn across the landscape... until it sits up. I need to get the large forms working first as in any drawing, so I tackle it from the direction of drawing the thing undisguised within the landscape and then applying camouflage from the types of material around it afterwards. I choose ArtRage to tackle this image, knowing that I have some custom, leafy brushes to throw at it.

Step-by-step: Paint a foreboding place

- 1 I start with a simple sketch, marking out where and how I want to place my skeletal figure in the landscape. I avoid getting into too much detail, aware it is in reality only a form on to which I intend



to apply rock and floral elements. Consider what sort of terrain and natural elements form the surrounding area and how your figure will fit in.

- 2 Still working monochrome I start building natural forms around and over the skeletal shape. I sketch a mounted human character to set the scale, having him look at the thing to help balance the



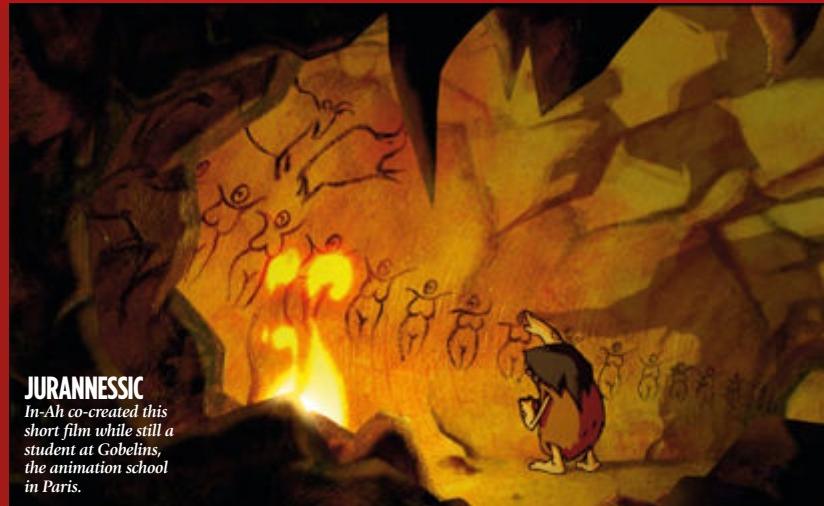
composition. For the sake of this particular example, I don't disguise the shape too much, but you should take it as far as you think feels right for the scene.

- 3 Once a base is established I can have fun with mark making, to create textural rock effects and plant growth. This includes use of leaf sticker brushes I made some time ago to save time. Don't



go overboard with such tools though, and make sure you integrate their look to the feel of the piece by using shadows and softened edges.

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JURANNESSEC

In-Ah co-created this short film while still a student at Gobelins, the animation school in Paris.



The Art of IN-AH ROEDIGER

The animator who's moved on from traditional media to working on some of the world's biggest **3D films** reveals that she's ready for another change...



"There's not enough time for me to pursue my painting and the other art projects I'm working on," says In-Ah Roediger. "It requires effort to keep up life drawing, for example, when your eyes feel like shrivelled prunes at the end of a very long day."

Long days, and nights, have indeed become something of the norm for In-Ah, originally from Germany but now living in Canada. She's used to putting in the hours as a 3D character animator and concept artist who's worked on huge hits such as Oz the Great and Powerful, The Amazing Spider-Man 2, Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2 and Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. And now there's another,



© Universal Studios

even more important, long-term project to focus on: her baby, born in late 2014.

Not that she's complaining in the least. "In terms of becoming a lead animator, I've always been ambitious and wanted a role with more responsibilities," she explains. "It's important not to be too shy in putting yourself forward and making sure your peers know that this is a path you wish to pursue!"

"Of course," she continues, "you also need the right seniority and have the skills to be considered. I had a few chances early on in my career to lead a team and supervise on smaller projects, which helped me grow and learn the ins and outs of politics and diplomacy."

In-Ah grew up in Germany and England – "We lived there on and off for 12 years" – and like most creatives knew she wanted to do something in that area; she just wasn't sure what. "Then I heard about a place in

DESPEREAUX

In-Ah worked as a character animator on *The Tale of Despereaux* during her time at Framestore in London.

Luxembourg where you could study animation... I didn't even know that was a job at that point. It was the perfect fit! I loved drawing and telling stories, and here I could do both by bringing my drawings to life. It totally blew my mind."

It's been a love/hate relationship with PCs, but we get along well on most days

That in turn led to a chance to join the world-famous Gobelins School of the Image in Paris, which would effectively seal her decision to become an animator. "With its high standards and connections to the industry with mentors from Disney and DreamWorks, I was able to improve to a high professional standard," she explains. "I knew what a portfolio or reel needed to look like in order to find employment in

the film industry, which unfortunately isn't automatically a part of the curriculum at every film school."

THE THIRD DIMENSION

In-Ah started out in 2D animation, drawing by hand in the traditional way, but as that industry began to stagnate in the early 2000s she decided to extend her studies and learn 3D computer animation. "I also loved Toy Story and had heard magical stories of working at Pixar, so that seemed like a good thing to aim for. It's been a love/hate relationship with PCs ever since, but we get along well on most days," she laughs.

To her delight her first big job was as junior animator on Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire – although it was a close call, because she was originally hired to work on the dismal film adaptation of Doom, the seminal computer game – "What a stroke of luck..." ➤



ARTIST TIP

BECOME MORE EFFICIENT

"You should at least be able to wrap your head around basic commands and scripts. This will help you a great deal in finding short cuts and time-saving tricks when that you need to rush out a shot in no time."



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UNDER YOUR NOSE

More from Universal Pictures'
The Tale of Despereaux, showing
some subtle facial animation.

In-Ah Roediger

VITAL STATISTICS

"I'm very much a 'live in the present' person"

Age 37

Date of birth

6 December 1978

Location

Vancouver,
British Columbia,
Canada

Website

www.in-ah.com

Favourite artist?

It's a bit difficult to just pick one. Top of my list are Tadahiro Uesugi and Robin Joseph – they make amazing use of light, colour, and composition!

Proudest moment?

Landing my first job on Harry Potter and sitting



in the cinema with friends and family to see my name in the credits for the very first time.
If you could have been born at any time, when would it be?

I'm quite a fan of the time we are in. I can't imagine a time without the internet – and yet I'm happy to have spent the '90s without it. I try to enjoy it as much as I can without dwelling on the past or thinking ahead too much.

Despite a later stint as senior animator on PlayStation 3 game Killzone 2, most of In-Ah's animation work has been for films – albeit a huge variety of them in terms of subject matter. Does the way she approaches her craft differ with the subject?

"Well, generally the main rules of animation, like weight, timing and spacing, all apply no matter what style you're working in," she says. "The biggest differences between VFX animation and fully animated features is that in VFX you normally need to animate more realistically. Performances need to be subtle, like the china doll in Oz the Great and Powerful, compared to a more free

Tex Avery-style of animation, as in Hotel Transylvania – where you can stretch and exaggerate the characters into shapes that aren't possible if you have realistic bones and muscles."

Unlike, say, creating concept art or being an illustrator, where you can spend days if not weeks working on your own, creating animation means constantly liaising with others in a team. It's a very social job, and In-Ah says it's important to listen to others, especially when you're just starting out.

"On my first job, Harry Potter, I had the best time. The team was incredible and even though I was intimidated, and afraid

You always wonder if you're doing well enough. Will they discover you have no talent for this and fire your ass? 



PERSONAL BEST...

Despite the huge workload in creating China Doll, In-Ah still thinks that "it was the most fun I have had on a project."



CHINA DOLL

This character from Oz the Great and Powerful was a real labour of love for In-Ah

"These are stills from one of my shots from Oz the Great and Powerful. I first started working on this in January 2012 and it finally got approved in November the same year! By that time it had gone through two or three other animators until it circled back to me.

"At that point it's hard to tell what part is your animation and how much of it was inherited by the other people that worked on it. It's a great example of how difficult it can be to claim a shot to be 'yours' when so many other people are putting on finishing touches.

"I'm proud of how these shots turned out after such an ordeal of trying to hit the client's notes. By the time it got back to me I had gotten to know the character of China Doll so well that I instinctively gave her the extra character that was missing. I remember how relieved I was when this got approved, and how very tired and depleted I was from all the late nights. It also reminds me of how close I felt to this character, as if she were a dear friend, and that I weirdly miss her..."

...BUT AT WHAT COST?

"It was the first time I felt like I wasn't sure if it was worth sacrificing your whole private life to this job," she warns.

Oz the Great and Powerful Imagery © Walt Disney Studios/Roth Films



if I could prove myself, they made me feel welcome and valuable."

AM I GOOD ENOUGH?

She mentions a surprising commonly fear among creatives and other professionals: the idea that one day you might be 'found out'. "Depending on the day and how long you have been chomping away at a shot, you always have this nagging feeling in the back of your head wondering if you're doing well enough. Are you animating fast enough? Are you hitting the notes [animating to the right dramatic moments]? Will they suddenly discover you have no talent for this whatsoever and fire your ass on the spot?"

In-Ah has always created her own private pieces: whimsical character designs, highly detailed and shaded sketches, life drawings and more. Her notebooks are bursting with them. She ➤



CHARACTER RESEARCH

An example of the abundance of character and movement studies that fill In-Ah's notebooks.



© Marvel Enterprises



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 2
In-Ah was senior animator on this latest comic book reboot – featuring rather different subjects than her usual work.



PASSING IT ON

In-Ah is an experienced teacher as well as animator, and this is something she'd like to pursue further in the future.

ANIMATE YOURSELF

Want to follow in In-Ah's footsteps? The artist reveals you need to stand out from the crowd

In-Ah has always been interested in teaching and helping newcomers to the animation industry, including a full-time stint at Central Saint Martin's in London during 2007/2008. "Usually the question that gets asked most is 'How do I get into the industry?' and 'What are the salaries like?'

"I always say it's important to know what you want to do in the broad field of animation. If you want to work in feature animation as a character animator, you need to be prepared to become pretty specialised in your field.

"Most importantly, I've known juniors to try and hide away in their corners, which is probably the worst thing you can do, especially when new to a job! It's important to lose those fears and show work and progress often."



HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA

It's not easy to make a bat seem human-like, but In-Ah managed it for her work in Hotel Transylvania.

© Columbia Pictures/Sony Pictures Animation



ARTIST TIP

BOND OVER YOUR WORK

"Enjoy the job as much as you can, and especially the people who you meet. These are bonds that can be everlasting and make a project that might be ungrateful grunt work a great time."



© Warner Bros.

WILD THINGS

One of In-Ah's earlier jobs, also completed at Framestore in London: Spike Jonze's adaptation of *Where The Wild Things Are*.



© Warner Bros.

▶ says she loves animating with sand and paints, and is a big fan of abstracts. These not only give free rein to her imagination away from commissions, they provide a welcome break from her day job. "I think the most important thing I've learned over the years is to have a healthy detachment from your job," she says. "Be passionate and invested, try to make it as good as you can, but don't take notes personally and just get on with it."

The most important thing I've learned is: have a healthy detachment from your job

IT BEGINS...

In-Ah couldn't have hoped for a better start in her animation career than working on the fourth Harry Potter film, *The Goblet of Fire*.

"On the other hand, it's hard to find the time for your own work when you're working on a film project – especially towards the last few months where it's become somewhat the norm to work intense overtime, sometimes 12-14 hour days or longer, no weekends. It can be so draining that all you really want to do at the end of the day is have a very, very large glass of wine."

TAKING A BREAK

With that in mind – and with her baby having now arrived – In-Ah has made the decision to leave film production for the time being. "My plans are – after regaining sleep and half a brain – to continue

teaching," she says, which is something she's always tried to do when time allows. "I have courses lined up locally [Vancouver, where she now lives] and in Europe, and hope to continue doing my classes and seminars over the next years."

"I don't think we want to uproot our little family every couple of years, just because the pool of jobs has dried up again," she adds of the increasingly competitive and hectic animation business. "Maybe things will change, but until then I'm happy to teach and work remotely while being an active part in my child's development."

Maybe now she'll also have time to work on more of her own personal illustrations? Animation's loss is our gain. ♦

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Issue 123

July 2015

Cris Delara paints our pin-up cover star, while a double-sided poster features art from Loopydave and Fiona Stephenson. Julie Dillon and Serge Birault (think octopuses and women in rubber) add their spin, and we learn about intriguing artist and model Zoë Mozart.



Issue 122

June 2015

We zoom into a film special by interviewing two Hollywood conceptual-art heavyweights: Michael Kutsche and George Hull. There's also insightful advice from storyboard artist Jim Cornish, our cover artist Alex Garner and concept designer Ben Mauro.



Issue 121

May 2015

This packed issue includes stunning imagery and brilliant ways to get you painting in the style of manga. FeiGiap transports you to warmer climes, while Jade Mosch's shares practical tips for unique art. Plus there's a unicorn on the cover, thanks to Paul Kwon!



Issue 120

April 2015

Get your dream job in the book illustration industry with advice from pro artists. Plus Tony DiTerlizzi on life after *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, Jonny Duddle paints a Harry Potter cover, and there's a free eBook worth £10.49 for every reader!

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October 2014



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September 2014



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August 2014



Issue 110
July 2014



Issue 109
June 2014



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May 2014

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*Resource files are available from issue 85 onwards.

LOCATION: Portland, US
PROJECTS: Dear JJ Abrams,
The Bible Project
OTHER PROJECTS: Ride On,
Good Coffee, The Seasoned
Traveller, LGI, Bluer Jeans,
OneSight, Trail Blazers Glasses,
Brave Bots
WEB: <http://ifxm.ag/s-truman>



Illustrator Robert Perez works on the storyboard for a Bible Project animation. Robert is art director on the project, but he still gets involved with the illustration side, too.



STUDIO PROFILE

SINCERELY TRUMAN

We meet the creative agency with a passion for animation, coffee and Star Wars

There can't be many people on this planet who didn't take umbrage with the dangly eared atrocity known as Jar Jar Binks. Most of us simply vented at our friends (and later, still filled with rage, social media). But the individuals who make up Portland-based creative agency Sincerely Truman instead took it upon themselves to offer some friendly preventative advice to the director of the latest film.

Dear JJ Abrams is a beautifully directed animation that sets out four rules to make Star Wars "great again".

Unsurprisingly, they don't include cuties, child-friendly characters, council meetings or excessive exposition. "My hope was to get a video out before the Episode VII script was fully baked, because in

my wildest dreams I thought I might be able to influence the new movies, and remind the powers that be of what

Star Wars is – or was," says

Sincerely Truman director

Prescott Harvey.

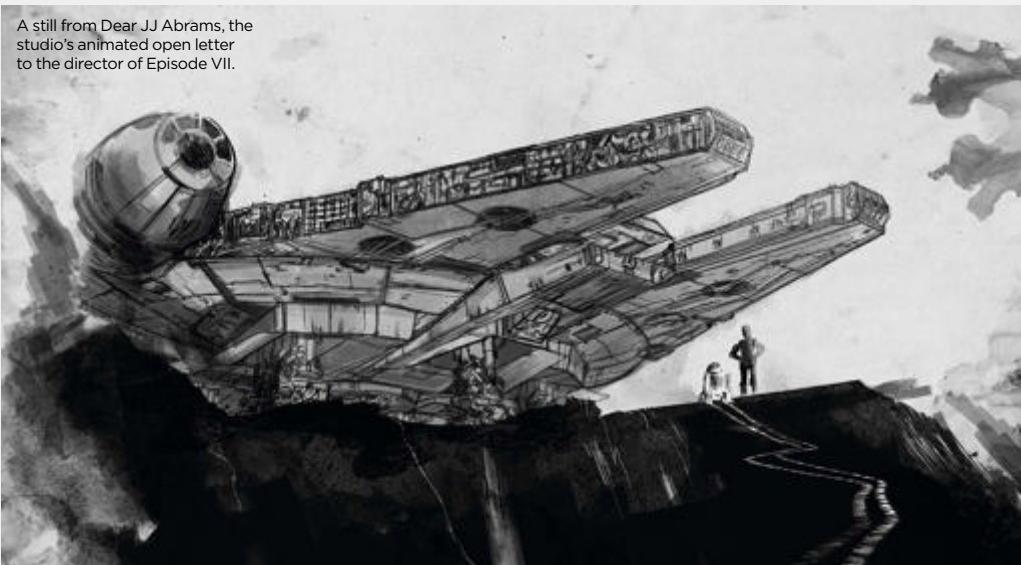


A GALAXY-SIZED LABOUR OF LOVE

The non-commercial short took several months to complete, and was mostly worked on after hours and at weekends. But the effort was worthwhile: when it launched on i09.com it garnered a quarter of a million views in ➤

STUDIO PROFILE

A still from Dear JJ Abrams, the studio's animated open letter to the director of Episode VII.



→ just 48 hours and shot up to more than a million by the end of the month. Better than that, though, JJ Abrams contacted the company directly to thank the video's creators for their input.

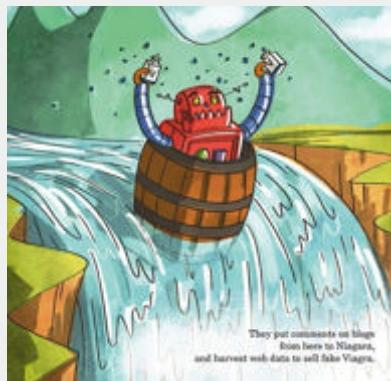
"Animation is in our blood," says agency founder **Jon Collins**. "It's such a great way to tell stories and communicate ideas that we're constantly drawn to it."

Housed in a space called The Easy, Sincerely Truman's talented, 25-strong team of digital artists, animators and storytellers work on everything from identities, campaigns and strategy to interactive sites and videos. Its clients span household brands such as Nike and Visa all the way through to children's charity OneSight and its own Portland artisan coffee house, Good Coffee.

Jon launched the agency in 2013 with the agency's director of brand growth, Dustin Evans. "We were originally an office of



Sincerely Truman's artists are able to turn their hand to a range of media, including comic panel art.



Sincerely Truman produced Bot or Not, for Solve Media. It explains to children how internet bots are a menace.

[digital video studio] Epipheo, which is an explainer video company based out of Cincinnati that I helped start in 2009," Jon explains. Epipheo didn't want to have an office that was a full service agency, so the two companies branched out and have since gone from strength to strength.

Studio culture rates highly at Sincerely Truman. The space houses a coffee and whiskey bar, café tables and a stage with a baby grand piano. "It's a place that wants to invest in the people and do quality work," says illustrator **Robert Perez**. "We're not here trying to be just another Portland creative agency. We're trying to bring our conviction and dedication to our craft together with people and companies we're passionate about."



“We work hard to make sure there isn't a cynical or stand-offish vibe to our studio”

Much of Robert's time is spent art-directing The Bible Project, a "passion project" at Sincerely Truman that aims to explain the titular tome in bite-size chunks. "I've been hearing these stories ever since I was little. Getting the chance to imagine and design what they can possibly look like is a dream come true," he says, adding that for animation projects like this the workflow generally begins with forming a solid concept and script.

COVERING ALL THE BASES

Robert explains: "I get pulled in to work on the storyboards; after that I begin the visual development of the style that will best communicate the story. Once both of those are approved, either I or another illustrator will get to work on creating the assets for the video. I'll help art direct the project from beginning to end and will jump into the trenches and work on art when I'm needed."





"People who work here genuinely like each other and find it a place they can be themselves," reflects Jon. "We work really hard to make sure there isn't a cynical or stand-offish vibe to our studio. Creativity comes from being open and vulnerable, not cool and calculated," he says.

"If I could sum up Truman in one word it would be 'hospitality,'" says animation and motion designer Darrin Casler, who's been freelancing at the studio for a year. "They make an effort to have open doors and keep the space inviting to all who walk through their doors."

That investment of passion is clear in the agency's involvement with its local community. Projects such as skateboard art show Ride On, a beer crafted in collaboration with local microbrewery Humble Brewery and, of course, Good Coffee, are all indicative of an ethically minded company that wants to give something back. But what about more fantasy and sci-fi projects? Jon is keen.

"Yes. Please. Give me that work," he laughs. Look forward to more projects along the line of Dear JJ Abrams soon, then.



The perils of worshipping false idols is tackled in one of the animations that comprise The Bible Project, as overseen by Robert Perez.



The Bible Project features stories from the Old and New Testaments, and although the videos are free to view, the project relies on crowd-funding.

KAYLA MAYER

The artist and storyboarder on life at Sincerely Truman

What's your role at the company?

I'm very lucky – I get to wear many hats. I start working at the storyboarding stage, doing first-pass boards and cleanup, and I collaborate with Robert on mood and direction for all the videos. But the bulk of my job involves illustrating backgrounds, characters and type. Sometimes I'll be called on to do some 2D animation, and I love when I get to do that.

How did you get the job?

I've only been at Truman for about 10 months now, but I'd only just graduated from PNCA a year before when the Bible Project approached me out of the blue. I was just one of a few portfolios they'd looked through, and it took about a week of doing test images for Jon and Robert, then I was on the team full time. The whole process felt very fast.

What do you enjoy most about working on the Bible Project?

I've been very fortunate to help shape the visual direction of the latest video, Sacrifice and Atonement. Developing the right mood for what Jon and Tim are trying to say is challenging, and I love that I get to help the team in this way – it feels very special.

What kind of training have you received since starting?

New skills for me involve storyboarding and animation, neither of which I'd ever formally done, and I've been able to learn on the job. Robert has also taught me style development and some fundamentals of art direction. But my other new skill is working interpersonally with a team: I've had to refine my communication skills, which feels awesome.

What advice would you give an artist looking to get a job like yours?

First, make sure your drafting chops are in order. Understand the principles behind drawing everything, and know how to break down shapes. Second, be fast. There's no time to get stuck on details in production work. If I had gotten this job without those abilities, the nicest portfolio in the world wouldn't have saved me.

What's the working environment at Sincerely Truman like?

Magical. I feel spoiled. Everyone is so friendly. I couldn't ask for more in my work environment. I love how productive and united this space feels, and I'm so happy to come to work every day.



Kayla has a full-time position at Sincerely Truman, but she still maintains her own websites and makes appearances at various conventions.

www.krmayerillustration.tumblr.com

Sketchbook

Dylan Teague

Pages overflow with colourful characters and dramatic compositions in this 2000 AD artist's sketchbook

ROUGH CHARACTER DESIGN

"Sometimes I just like to leave stuff at the pencil stage. I don't know why, but I always feel something gets lost when you finish up a drawing. I think in the rough stage your mind fills in the blanks and makes a better drawing."



DOODLING

"I think I started with Batman on this and worked my way out from there."



Artist PROFILE

Dylan Teague

COUNTRY: Wales



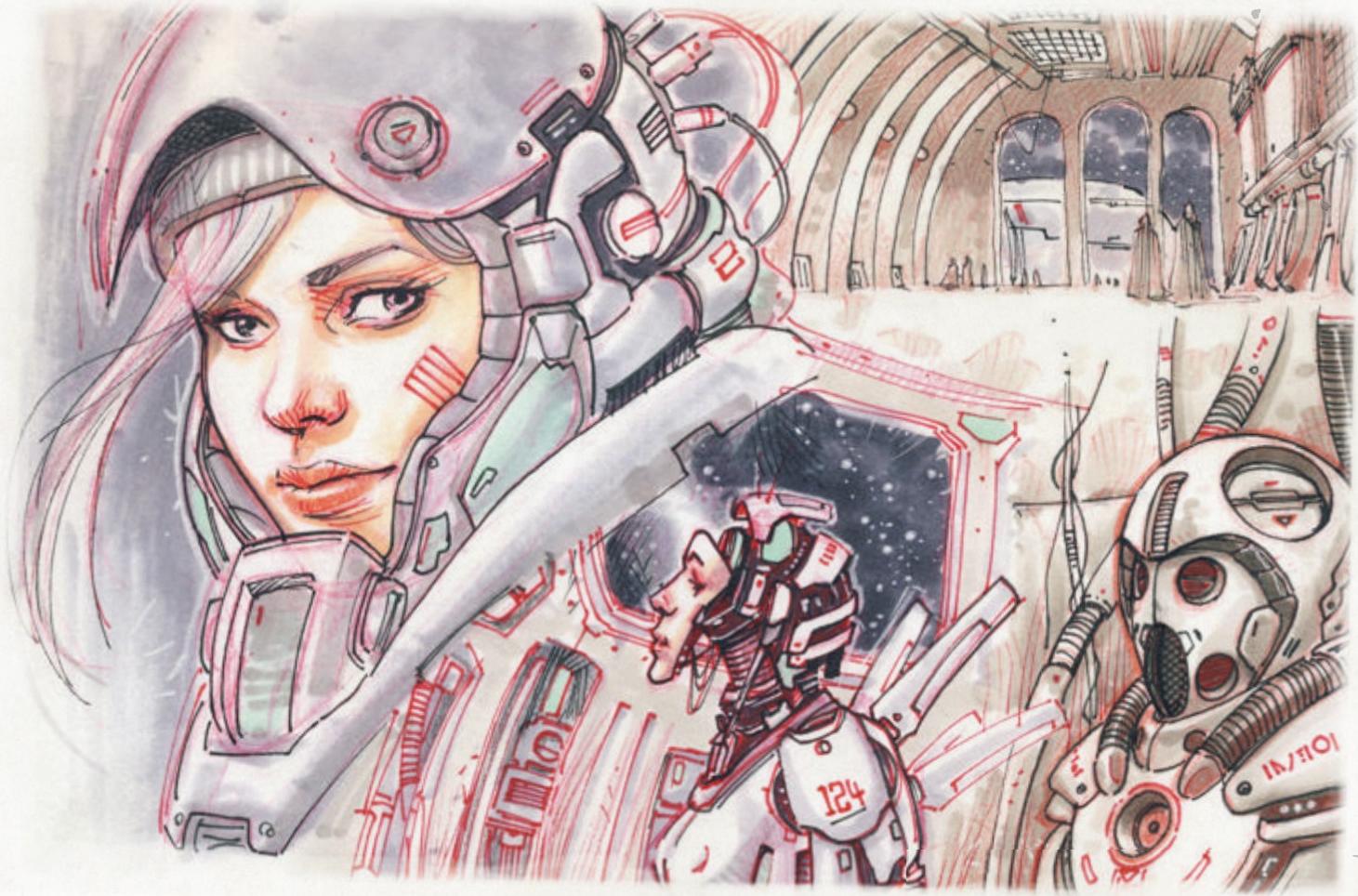
Dylan has been drawing and painting professionally for 20 years, mainly creating comics for 2000 AD, including Judge Dredd and Rogue Trooper. Over the past few years he's produced graphic novels for Delcourt and Kennes Editions. He's kept an updated sketchbook with him since he was a kid.

www.instagram.com/dylbot2099



A6 SKETCHING

"I had the idea to fill up a little A6 sketchbook with scenes and character designs. It's a fun size to work on, because you can be quite loose with perspective, but it can be a little restrictive, too."



"I don't know why, but I always feel something gets lost when you finish up a drawing"

A5 SKETCHING

"Again, smaller sketchbooks can be a lot less daunting to work in. You're not faced with a big blank page. I was also experimenting with some coloured fine-liners, which were fun."



PORTRAITS

"Sometimes I like to sketch from photos in magazines. I think doing this and life drawing can really help improve your drawing skills."

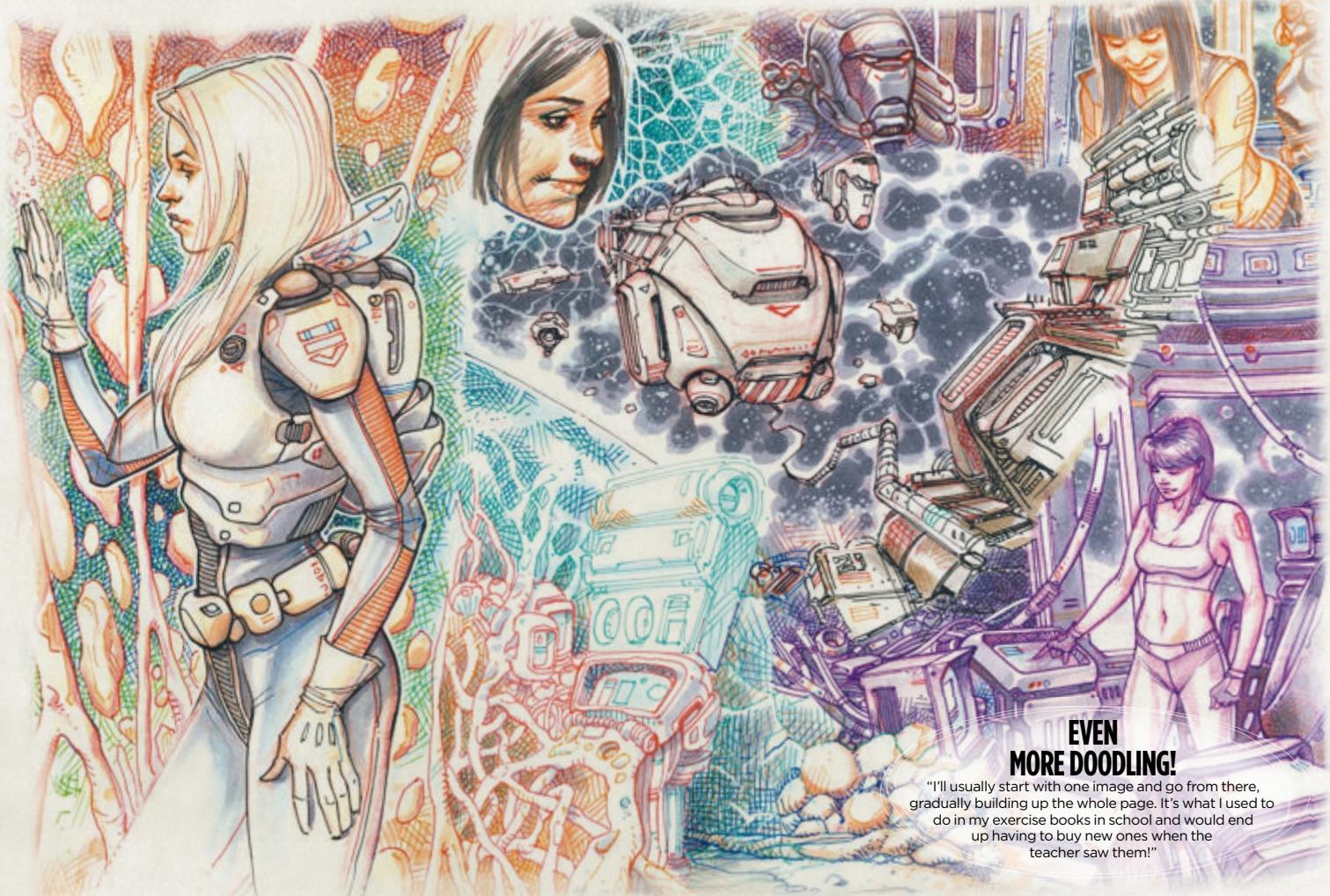
Sketchbook

MORE DOODLING

"Here I was just coming up with scenes and ideas for a strip I'll get round to finishing one day..."

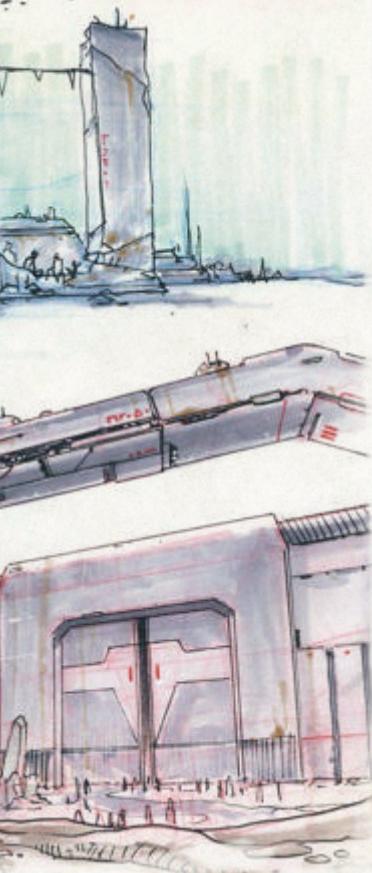
SCENES

"I don't often have defined pictures in my head - I have to work stuff out on paper. Yet for some reason I had both these images quite worked out before I drew them. I ended up tidying both up with a bit of CG enhancement to the skies, but this is just the raw scan."



EVEN MORE DOODLING!

"I'll usually start with one image and go from there, gradually building up the whole page. It's what I used to do in my exercise books in school and would end up having to buy new ones when the teacher saw them!"

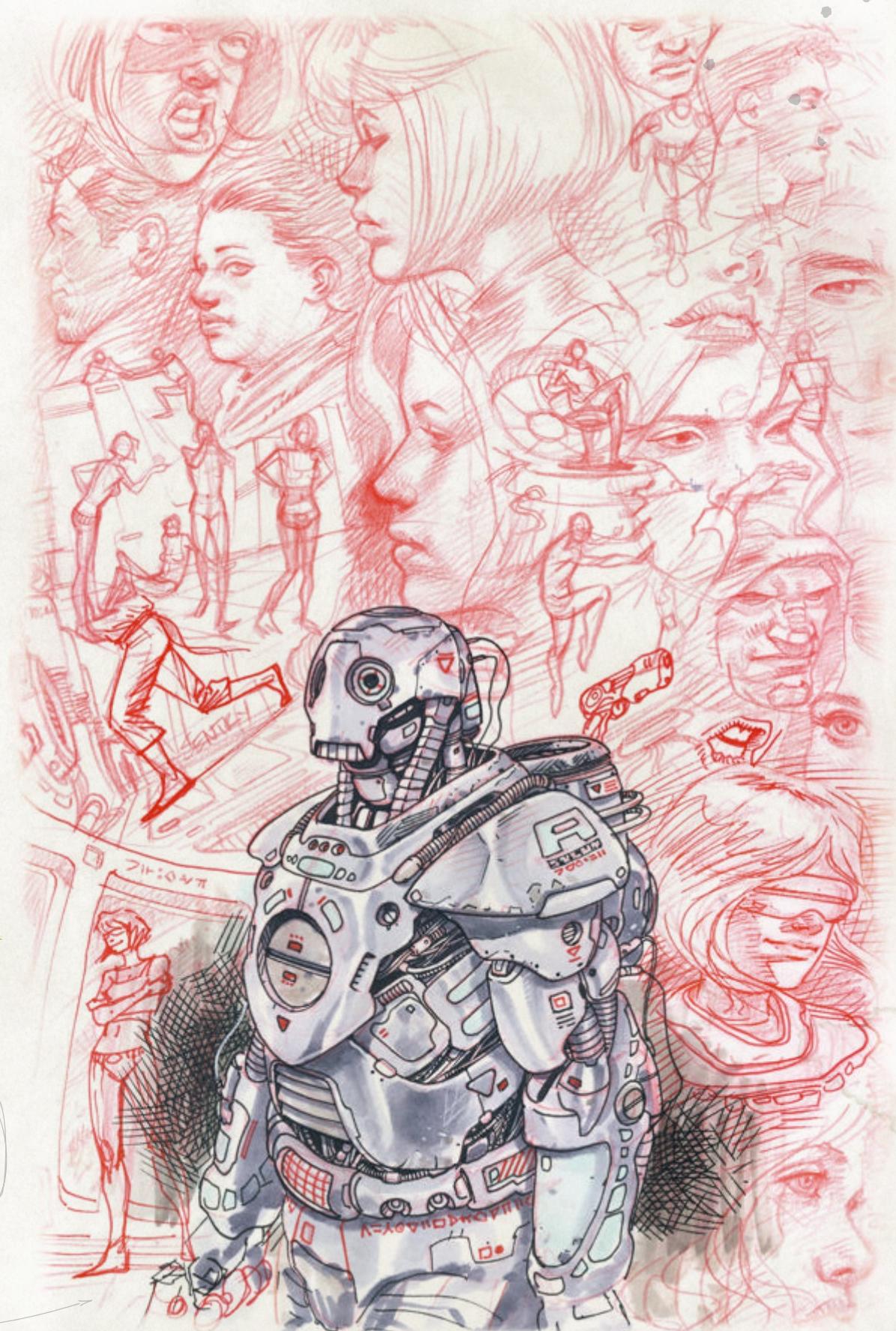


"I used to doodle in my exercise books in school and would end up having to buy new ones"

CHARACTER DESIGN

"This page started with me working out a robot design, but I ended up reverting to doodling again. The robot was for my Delcourt book Le Grande Evasion: Asylum.

I simplified them a bit in the book because I had to draw a lot of them!"



Want to share your sketches? Email us with a selection of your artwork, to sketchbook@imaginefx.com
NEXT MONTH'S SKETCHBOOK: CHUCK LUKACS



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NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

ImagineEX Workshops

Advice from the world's best artists

60



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**Workshops assets
are available...**

Download each workshop's WIPs, final image and brushes by turning to page 6. And if you see the video workshop badge, you can watch the artist in action, too.



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Sam Nielson balances the competing demands of a complicated illustration using three simple rules.

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Photoshop

LEARN TO CONTROL VISUAL CONTRAST

Sam Nielson demonstrates how he's able to balance the competing demands of a complicated illustration using just three simple rules...

Artist PROFILE

Sam Nielson

COUNTRY: US

Sam has been part of the animation industry for over 20 years, providing concept art and illustration for Disney/Avalanche, Sony Pictures Animation, Blizzard Entertainment, HarperCollins, Scholastic and many others.
<http://ifxm.ag/s-nielson>

GET YOUR RESOURCES

See page 6 now!

PRO SECRETS

Stylus buttons

If you have a stylus with two buttons, there's no reason for one of them to be assigned to double-click (the default). Instead, assign one of them to be a function you use frequently.

I have one button assigned to right-click and the other to the drag-resize brush shortcuts (Ctrl+Alt+right-drag on PC, Cmd+Opt+left-click+drag on Mac). This speeds up my painting time a lot!

Painting digitally is almost without its limits. You have access to any colours you want, a massive selection of brushes, as many layers as your computer can handle, and the power to introduce tons of detail and texture very easily.

However, bringing these factors together in the same piece is likely to result in a poor illustration. For this reason, half of good painting is about knowing anatomy, texture, light and so

forth. The other half is about controlling those choices and aligning conflicting elements to what the image is saying.

Most of the tricks I use to discipline my art process come from one design principle: contrast control in composition. The rules for contrast control have three parts. First, people's eyes are drawn to higher contrast areas. Second, too many high-contrast areas are fatiguing to the eye. Third, areas of interest should be surrounded by areas of simplicity or rest,

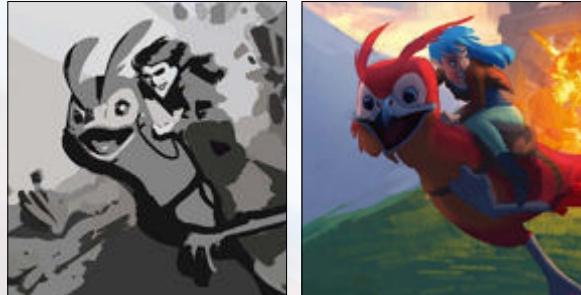
and this fluctuation of rest and detail should create paths you want your audience's eyes to travel along. These rules are simple to remember, but difficult to apply while painting.

This control over contrasts must be expressed simultaneously in the colours of the piece, the values, the edges, the textures and more. All these things must also be done in context: the detail areas should communicate the story, and the rest areas can't be too boring or messy!



1 Pushing through failures

This is the hardest part! I have an idea, but when I draw it's a mess. After a few goes I feel like a terrible artist. My problem is often story. If the drawing isn't working, I need to think about narrative: what's happening, what motivates the characters, what idea am I trying to communicate? Once I have the answers, everything usually falls into place.



2 Rough block-ins

One of the best ways to avoid chaos early on is to paint rough block-ins. These are the equivalent of thumbnails, but don't need to be small – you can do them quickly if you stay rough. Having said this, if your composition works when it's small, then it will probably work when large. I like to test the values this way, too.

In depth Control contrast



Workshops

PRO SECRETS

The value of clipping masks

I use clipping masks all the time because they confine the painting area to the layer's edges underneath. The easiest way to activate this is to hold down Alt (Opt on a Mac) and click the line between the two layers you want to link up. Alt-click again between the layers to release the Mask.



3 Prepping the image

I like using flat coloured layers as another test for the colours and values. The great thing about this graphic version of the image is that I can use it later to grab selections of those different parts of the image. I just keep a stack of layers or a flat-coloured version under the image and then select them as necessary later.



4 Start the underpainting

Once I'm happy with the rough, I start with my background. I'll sometimes begin with a colour that I wouldn't mind showing through the cracks in the painting – in this case a bright orange that pushes the intensity of the scene where it peeks through the background. I paint enough of the background in to set the context for the characters.



5 Ambient lighting

If I'm painting daylight, then the shadows need to look great. One way to do this is to start lighting the characters with the ambient light in the scene: the warm light bouncing off the ground, the cool light from the sky and the soft rim light from the explosion. This can be as detailed as I want.



6 Key light sculpting

The ambient light underneath enables me to paint the sunlit areas on a separate layer and then erase it where I need shadow. This part of the painting is like sculpting: I'm pushing and pulling the light until the forms have the roundness they need. My goal is to put the highest contrasts where I want people to look, such as faces.



7 Cleaner transitions

Complicated colour shifts, such as the patterned gradient of the yellow feathers, are difficult to paint and can become confusing for the viewer if you're not careful. So I create a separate version of the red feathers on a separate layer, then use Curves to change it to yellow. A Layer Mask on an Eraser brush can be used to manage the transition.



8 Background detail

As I go, I carefully add detail into the background. I want the hillside in the background to be rocky, but not interesting. I want the explosion to be energetic, but not distracting. I don't add all the detail at once because alternating between the character and the background helps me see problem spots.



9 Highlights and accents

Reflections and highlights are fun to paint, but they can be distracting to the viewer if you're not careful. Keeping specular highlights on a separate layer as I paint enables me to adjust their intensity and position without messing around with the matte surfaces underneath.



10 Use of big shapes

I see good composition as a series of large shapes that direct attention to a series of smaller shapes. Once I think of the background explosion as a larger shape, it's obvious that I need to group its values together so it redirects attention to the smaller shapes in the girl. So I paint orange over the area using an Overlay layer.



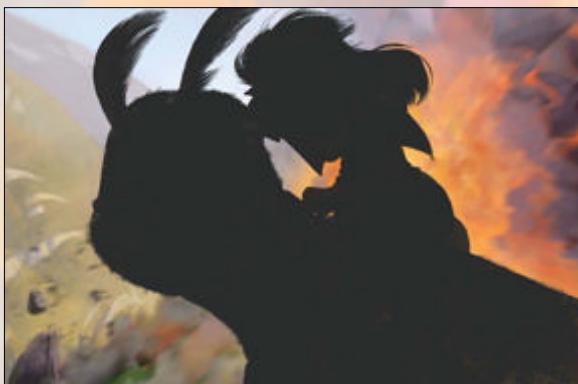
11 Finer details

Sometimes I'll put down textures or fine details midway through my painting so I'm aware of how they're affecting the composition. I can then compensate as I go. Other times, like with the beak of the bird, I'll immediately subdue the contrast so it can exist without pulling attention away from anything else.



12 Textured brushes

I have a variety of textural brushes that can be a lifesaver when I'm putting in detail quickly. The leather jacket and trousers have been bothering me the whole time, so I finally add some subtle texture to the surface, concentrated in places where I know there would be a lot of wear, such as on the seams.



13 Edge control

Even with all my work to control things, I feel like the characters aren't popping off the background. So I apply a Zoom Blur (found under Radial Blur in the Filters menu) to parts of the background. This makes all the background edges softer, but preserves a lot of the energy of the explosion.



14 Warms and cools

I wish my last step had some sparkle or flourish, but it's still about managing high-detail areas. The debris is competing with the warm colours of the bird, so I add purple to the smoke and blue-green to the grass, to help that area recede. I use a flat-coloured Luminosity layer to see colour temperatures more clearly. It's the polish the piece needs.



PRO SECRETS

Blending options

I use the 'Blend if' section under Blending Options to control when and where a layer is transparent. This makes possible effects such as having a Multiply layer that only affects brighter parts of the image. In the list of your image's layers, double-click the thumbnail for the layer you want to affect. Select Blending Options and you'll see sliders in the Blend if section on the bottom; these make the layer transparent if it's brighter or darker than colours on that layer or the layer underneath.





TV Paint DISCOVER ANIMATION'S 12 PRINCIPLES

Aaron Blaise explains his approach to animating a larger-than-life character, using the 12 principles of animation

Artist PROFILE

Aaron Blaise
COUNTRY: US



A graduate of Ringling College of Art and Design, Aaron worked as an animator for Walt Disney for 21 years. He was co-director of Brother Bear and nominated for an Oscar. <http://ifxm.ag/ablaise>

In depth Animation's 12 principles

My time spent working in animation totals nearly 30 years now. For most of that time I was at Disney, drawing for films such as *The Lion King*, *Mulan*, *Aladdin*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and more. I also co-directed a film called *Brother Bear*, for which I was eventually nominated for an Oscar.

Originally though, I wanted to become an illustrator and had no intention of going into animation. While in college I was lucky enough to land an internship at Disney and I got paired up with and trained by legendary animator Glen Keane. He taught me about the 12 Fundamentals of Animation, which were pioneered by the original Nine Old



Men – animators who worked directly with Walt Disney himself.

These principles are: squash and stretch; anticipation; staging; straight ahead action and pose to pose; follow through and overlapping action; slow ins and slow outs; arcs; secondary action; timing; exaggeration; solid drawing; and appeal.

Once I learned and applied these principles to a series of drawings and watched them come alive, I was hooked. There's something about animation that's truly magical and now I want to share this magic, and my approach to it, with you.

In this workshop I'll take you through my process and show you how I approach animating a scene and apply these principles. These fundamentals are relevant whether you work with pencil and paper, in software such as TVPaint or even on a computer or tablet, using stop-motion animation.

Now, let's get started and create a little animation magic of our own... ➔

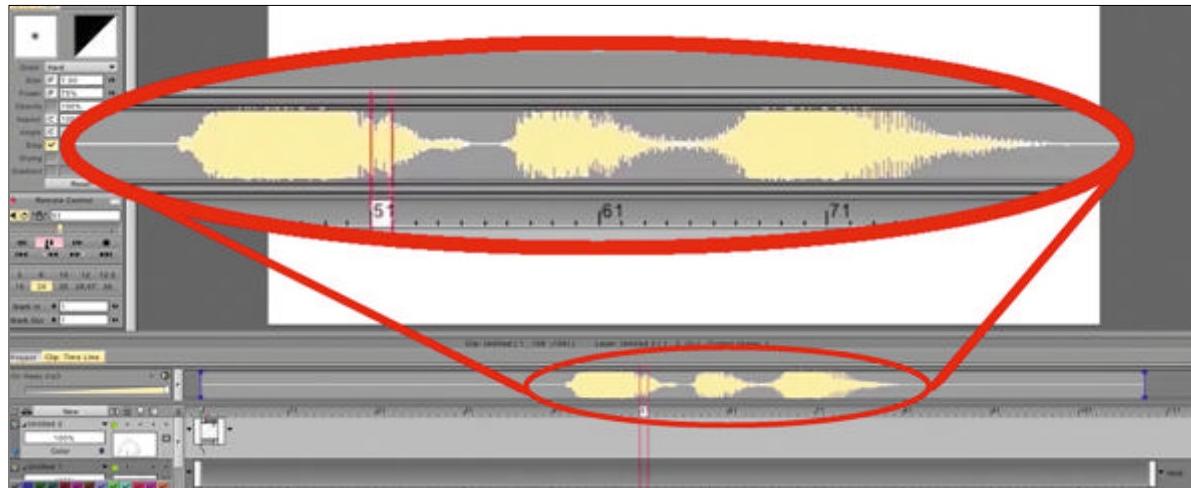


Workshops

PRO SECRETS

Mouth shapes

Don't over-animate your character's mouth shapes. Watch The Muppets... Seriously, if you look at them they only have two shapes, open and closed. Yet they achieve believable dialog by hitting them at the right timing.



1 Import the audio

It's the combination of sound with drawings that makes for compelling animation, so it's crucial to obtain good, clear dialogue. Make sure that your audio clip evokes emotion and is something that you'll enjoy animating. You're going to be hearing it a lot!



2 Plan your scene

At Disney we would spend weeks planning a scene before we put pencil to paper. On Beauty and the Beast I created hundreds of thumbnails and did weeks of planning before I started to animate. What feeling do you get from the audio? What are the scene requirements? There are no unimportant throwaway shots. Maximise the impact of every frame.

3 Create thumbnail sketches

It's absolutely crucial that you make thumbnail sketches of your scene. Typically, these will be of your key poses. You'll be constantly referring to these thumbnails as you animate. This is your opportunity to work out the scene, so try to get the best poses you can.



4 Draw your key poses

Now that you have thumbnails of your key poses you can start drawing them. If you are working in software such as TVPaint, lay these initial poses out on the timeline in sync with your audio. With your key poses in place you can proceed to creating the rest of the animation. Key poses are also referred to as keyframes.

5 Breakdown the scene

The term breakdown means the important pose images between keyframes. You're breaking down the motion into a series of smaller and smaller poses. As you space these breakdowns along your timeline, or flip through them, you'll start to see a sense of movement. It'll be choppy at first, but this process eventually creates the feeling of life.

PRO SECRETS

Keep it simple

A character that has a simple appearance and can be "constructed" with various shapes will enable you to animate it more easily from various angles. This will give you more ability to focus on the most important part: the acting.

In depth Animation's 12 principles



6 Acting out the scene

Animation and acting are closely related. You don't need to be an actor to animate, but it's important to rehearse your scene. You need to convey emotion and your scene needs to be believable. Get up and act it out, so that you gain a sense of the timing and physics involved. Many animators keep a mirror at their desk and take note of their facial expressions while saying dialogue.

Shortcuts
Full screen
O (PC & Mac)
In TVPaint, click the zero
key to display a full screen
to animate on.



7 Keep your drawings loose

Work fast and efficiently: keep your drawings loose and fluid so you don't get bogged down in detail. This will enable you to move through your scene quickly without losing momentum. However, ensure volumes and anatomy stay consistent! I love the feeling of the hand-drawn line. Some may prefer a crisp edge, but this isn't the time for it. You can clean up your drawing afterwards.

8 Flip your images

When working in traditional animation you would flip back and forth between sheets of paper to see if the movement was correct. Working digitally, you can achieve this same effect (and more) with the Onion Skin tool. The tool enables you to see each drawing or frame overlapping the previous and next ones. Make sure you continually use it to maintain consistency. ➤

PRO SECRETS

Act on your new ideas

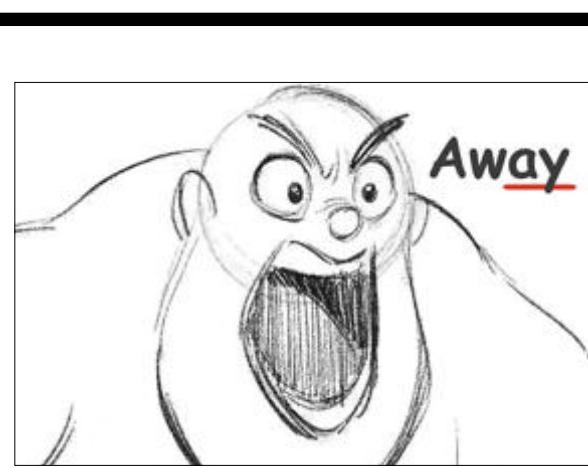
Don't be afraid to change up your animation on the fly. Quite often, as I get into a scene after spending a day or two thumbnailing, I find a more entertaining way of acting it out. Sometimes we can only make these discoveries once we get into the scene and start actually drawing it out through the character. Remember, your thumbnails are your starting point. Always look for ways to improve the entertainment.

Workshops



9 Remember the fundamentals

While animating your scene refer to the 12 Fundamentals of Animation I mentioned in the introduction. Using exaggeration, and squash and stretch, in your poses will enhance the feeling of emotion. Likewise, incorporating anticipation and overlapping action into your drawings will give your scene a sense of life. Using these in combination will give your scene a sense that it's grounded in reality.



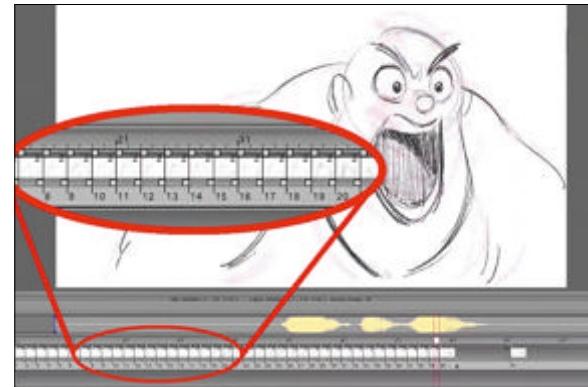
10 Animating dialogue

When animating a dialogue scene, don't overdo it. Creating a mouth shape for every syllable is a common mistake that makes animation feel unnatural. Focus on the key sounds, major vowels and hard consonants. And create mouth poses a few frames before the sound. If you study speech in slow motion you'll see our mouth starts forming shapes of words before we hear them.



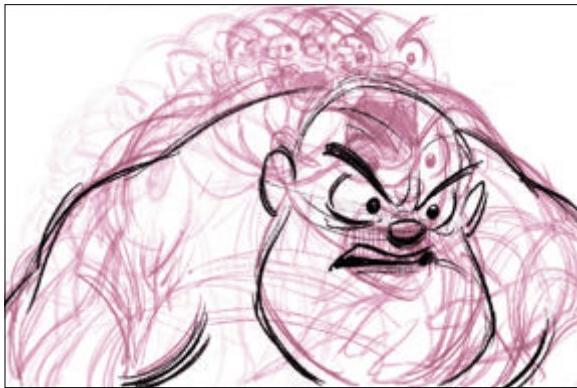
11 Make use of arcs

One approach that will take your animation to another level is the use of arcs. In the natural world things tend to move in arcs. Balls travel in an arc to the ground. Butterflies tend to float in a series of overlapping arcs. Playing with the concept of arcs through space (X, Y and Z axes) will give your scene a much more dynamic feel.



12 Animate on 2s

The eye perceives individual frames as continuous motion and a standard theatrical film has a frame-rate of 24 frames per second. Life-like animation is animated on '2s': we hold each image for two frames. In most cases 12 unique drawings for each second of your scene is enough. However, for faster action for example, you may need more drawings to achieve smoothness.



13 Add 'in betweens'

Similar to breakdowns, 'in betweens' is an animation term that refers to the images or frames that go in between the breakdown poses/frames. These are all the rest of the drawings that flesh out your scene and give it a life-like feel. Continue to create these in betweens (typically on 2s) until your scene is polished and believable.



14 Explore new techniques

Even after nearly 30 years of animating I'm still enthralled with the magic of it. Seeing your images come to life is a special feeling. I'm still experimenting and discovering new techniques, and I would encourage you to do the same: experiment with tempos, pacing, stories and character attitudes. The more you do it, the better you'll get. Have fun!

PRO SECRETS

Consider your workload

The more intricate a character's design, the longer it will take to animate. For example, when I designed the character of Rajah in Aladdin I tried to give him a simple and almost geometric design to his stripes. This conveyed his nature as a tiger to the viewer, but didn't make each drawing too labour-intensive.



Krita Desktop STARTING OUT IN KRITA DESKTOP

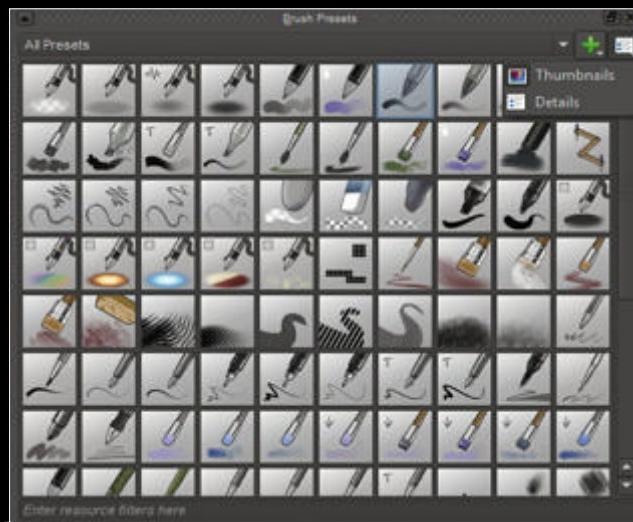
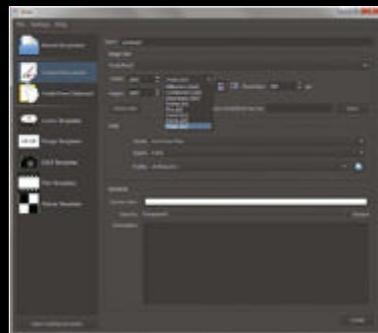
Take a tour of Krita, create a new file and learn how to use preset tools as **Katarzyna Oleska** explains the basics of the free program

Krita Desktop is a free, open-source, fully featured painting program available to all, which you can download at www.krita.org.

On the website you'll also find information on how to participate in developing the program and learn how to donate money to support those who do it full time.

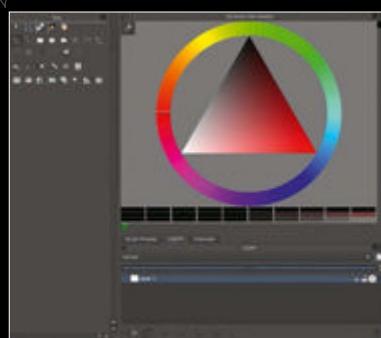
1 Creating a new file

You can choose a predefined template or create your own (and save it for the future). To do this you'll need to assign width and height dimensions to your future canvas (in pixels, centimetres, millimetres and so on) and also choose its resolution in PPI. As well as that, you have the option to choose Color Model (for example, RGB or CMYK), Color Profile, Canvas Color and Opacity.



2 Default workspace

Krita's default workspace consists of two toolbars along the top, (Main and File/Brush settings), the Canvas in the middle, Dockers on both sides and the Status Bar at the bottom. Everything except for the main toolbar can be either hidden or visible. Personally, I find it more useful to keep the File/Brushes toolbar, Tools, Layers Brush Presets and Advance Color Selector always visible as I do my work.



3 Predefined brushes

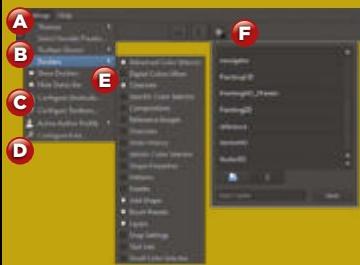
Krita provides many useful standard brushes that differ depending on particular settings. Every brush can be used in an Erase mode. To toggle between the Brush and Eraser modes press E while using the Brush tool. Another useful shortcut is Ctrl/Cmd for colour picking, and Shift+press and drag left or right to change the size.

Artist PROFILE
Katarzyna Oleska
COUNTRY: England

Katarzyna is a self-taught illustrator who works for various publishers and private customers, specialising in portraits, caricatures, fantasy and sci-fi illustration. She has illustrated some major book titles.
<http://ifxm.ag/katara>

CUSTOMISE YOUR KRITA WORKSPACE

You may initially feel overwhelmed with all the tools. You may think some will never be useful, that they'll just get in the way. Thankfully Krita's creators thought of that and made it possible to customise and save workspaces, manage keyboard shortcuts and customise advanced tools. You can turn Dockers on and off as well as drag them to any place you desire. Here are some ways to make Krita most useful to you.



A. Color themes

Click the arrow to expand and gain access to different Krita Themes.

B. Visible Toolbars and Dockers

Click the arrows to expand and choose which Toolbars (File>Brushes & Stuff) and which Dockers you want to be visible or hidden from view. You can also turn Dockers on and off by right-clicking the name of one of the visible Dockers.

C. Configure shortcuts

Clicking this gains access to a window where you can easily change and assign new shortcuts to tools and actions.

D. Configure Krita

For more advanced users, here's where you can configure Color Management, Display, Canvas-only settings, Grids and so on.

E. Show Dockers and hide Status Bar

Select to show or hide Status Bar located at the very bottom, and/or all the Dockers at the same time.

F. Toggling through Workspaces

Clicking this icon gains access to a window, where you can select one of the predefined workspaces or save/select the one(s) you've created. You can create as many as you need and easily skip between them.

Photoshop

PAINT SOFT AND LOOSE STROKES



Tyson Murphy shares his easy-to-follow approach for painting a rugged male character, giving him a stylised and painterly appearance

Artist PROFILE

Tyson Murphy

COUNTRY: US



Tyson is a lead character artist at Blizzard Entertainment.

Since studying animation at Brigham Young University, he's worked for Disney Interactive, Chair Entertainment and as a freelance concept artist and illustrator.
<http://ifxm.ag/t-murphy>

GET YOUR RESOURCES

See page 6 now!

PRO SECRETS

Simplify your composition

When I'm doing an illustration, I always separate every subject into one of the following: foreground, midground or background. This enables me to keep everything organised and simple, so that I can focus on making each section impressive and interesting. Without some sort of basic organisation, an illustration can get very confusing very quickly.

T

hroughout my process I always ask myself: "Is it interesting?" We should constantly be asking ourselves that question, at every stage of the artwork.

In my workshop I'll talk about the design phase of my process and how to create interesting shapes and character. I'll focus on the face and some general costume design, before starting to paint.

After the drawing is complete, I'll talk a little about how I approach colour, and

how I try to keep things simple. After blocking out my base colours, I'll tackle the lighting and rendering.

I'll be using a few different Photoshop layer modes, including Multiply and Color Dodge, to block in the lighting. Remember to keep looking at your piece and asking yourself, "Is it interesting?" If some part of it isn't grabbing your attention, then try something else. If you're not enjoying it, then it's unlikely someone else will enjoy it.

To achieve my painterly style, I like to get the painting to a point where I can forget about layers and blend modes, and just paint with my Bristle brush and a Smudge brush.

I think about the light source, bounce light and ambient light while I detail and paint the whole piece. Don't be afraid of brushstrokes or add messy colours in some areas. It'll all add to the style of the piece and set your art apart. Okay, let's see how I get on with my rugged warrior...



1 Lay down the line art

This is the most important part of the process. Your idea, character, pose and story need to be encapsulated in your line drawing. Be loose and quick, keeping energy in your lines. Make sure your base is strong. It's pretty rough, but I'll be painting over almost everything anyway. Don't get too attached – be ready to change anything, to make it more interesting.



2 Block out flat colour

I set the layer mode to Multiply, make a new layer underneath the line work and start brushing in flat colours. Even at this stage, I want to make the image interesting, I keep my colour scheme limited: everything is a warm, earth tone. Even the green is a very desaturated yellow-green, creating a more realistic and visually pleasing feel.

In depth Loose strokes

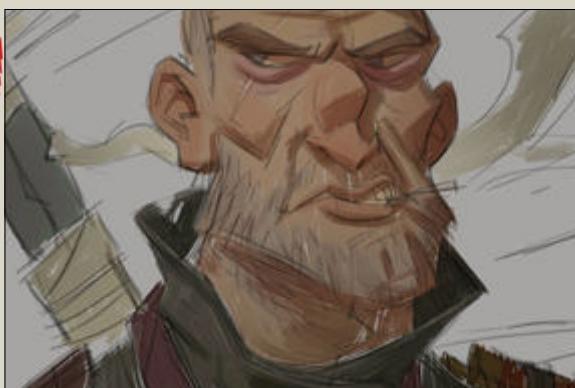


Workshops



3 Creating colour variation

I brush in slight colour variations to break up the flat colour: more red in the nose, ears and cheeks; some yellow in the forehead; slightly saturated greens in the jacket; and reds in the scarf. The purpose is to be very subtle. I don't want to change the overall colour – I just want slight variation, to give the character an appealing feel.



4 Blocking in the shadows

I set a new layer to Multiply and think about a light source – the sun is lighting my character from the front and top. I use a warm grey and paint in cast shadows and surfaces that are pointing away from the light source. It's hard to get this right first time; I erase and try out different shadows until it feels right.



5 Darken the scene

Using a big Soft brush, I darken the piece overall slightly. Many times throughout a painting, I'll notice that things are looking too dark or too bright, or that other adjustments need to be made. Try and get in the habit of noticing when your painting has a problem, and react accordingly.

6 Occlusion painting

Using a Soft brush on a Multiply layer, I brush in some ambient occlusion. Occlusion is when light can't reach into tight spaces, making it much darker inside them – such as in the ears, nostrils, mouth, neck and folds on the jacket. I like to exaggerate occlusion and have it very clear and present in my paintings. I love its solid, clay-like feel.



7 Remove the character

Using the Lasso tool, I select the character and anything attached to him in the foreground. I'm not super careful, because I'm going to clean up and change as I go. This is an important step: you don't want to be painting around your character every time you need to change the background. Doing this makes it much easier to change things.

8 Smudge my edges

Now that my character is separated from the background, I switch to my Smudge tool to start cleaning up. Everything I've done so far is about creating a base. I'll be painting over the whole thing now. There'll be plenty of work in cleaning it up and the Smudge tool helps a lot, smoothing out messy areas, softening round edges and so on.





9 Build up the lighting

Using my Bristle brush, I like to think in layers of light. After brushing in some light, I'll increase the value just a little bit more and brush that in. Then I'll increase it a little bit more, and brush it in. I do this all the way up to the highlights.



10 Painting corrections

I try to be reactive in my painting process and make changes as I need to. This might include using an Overlay layer to brush more colour under the eyes, or darkening shadows to make his cheeks more saturated. I also slightly change the design over time (it's a good thing that I'm not too attached to my line work!), using tools such as Liquify.



11 Continue rendering the character

Every brush stroke I put down, I imagine where the light source is and how it's illuminating my character. I love it when my work feels three-dimensional, so I try to be as accurate as possible. I also think about materials: how does skin look compared to cloth, or metal compared to leather? Making materials read correctly is very important.



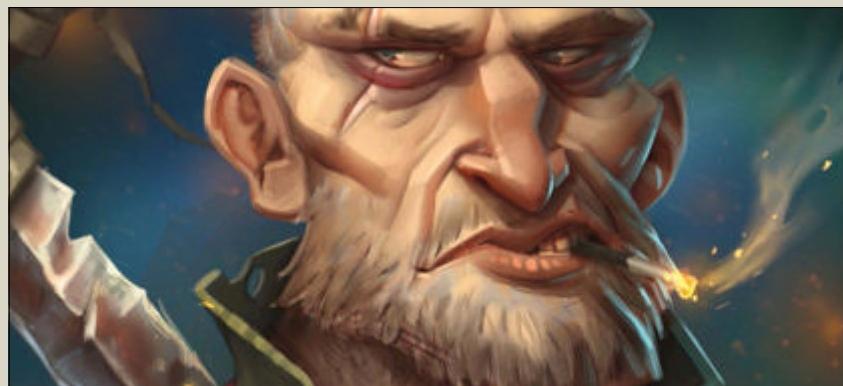
12 Balance the detailing process

Detailing can be dangerous, because it's so fun! I enjoy putting a high level of detail into paintings. You can be quick and loose with details; just paint them more as suggestions of detail, instead of spending too much time on them. Little scratches, bumps and so on are great for introducing an extra dimension of visual interest in an image.



13 Background and secondary lights

I want the illusion of depth of field, so I use a blur filter to make everything out of focus at the back. The cool background colour is shining on his shadow side, creating an interesting rim light, and I have bounce light from various pieces of his costume. All these secondary light sources should be subtle and not overpower the main light source.



14 Putting in the final touches

A large amount of time is spent painting and smudging, painting and smudging. There's no trick – it's just time and patience, and being willing to look at your piece honestly and make changes. Towards the end I always do a few final touches: a Levels adjustment to create more contrast, a noise layer and some last tiny highlights. And then I call the painting finished. I hope you've enjoyed reading about my process!



PRO SECRETS

Collapse your working layers

Some artists paint on many layers. I use quite a few layers when I need to, but every now and then I collapse all my layers and just paint. This helps me stay in a painterly state of mind, instead of relying on technology and layers. It'll also increase confidence and helps you make changes on your work for the better.

Workshops

Atmospheric perspective

This is created with a radial gradient set to between eight and 10 per cent. I try to lighten the farthest point of the image by painting bigger and bigger shapes until I'm happy it looks like real-world atmosphere.

Real-world references

I look for images of Tokyo and other Japanese cities, trying to match the perspective of the piece. Then I paint over them to remove the flatness that some photos have. You can also simplify the shapes by putting down a few brushstrokes on top of photos.



© iStock.com/Sean Pavone

Painting the characters

When I'm painting on top of my rough 3D model I follow the lighting setup that I created using Maya. This makes everything look more realistic because the light will be the same from one character to another. Then I add rim light to make the figures pop out.

Maya & Photoshop CONSTRUCT A VAST SCI-FI CITY

Concept artist **Aurélien Fournier** paints a futuristic urban environment using 3D modelling and 2D painting techniques

Artist PROFILE

Aurélien Fournier
COUNTRY: France

 Aurélien is a concept artist working freelance in the film industry, mostly on environment and prop work. He says he learnt most of the things he knows by studying artists he admires.
<http://ifxm.ag/aurelienf>

 **GET YOUR
RESOURCES**
See page 6 now!

My initial idea was to depict a gigantic city so high, you can't see the top from the ground. One of the most important methods of bringing grand design ideas to life is to borrow elements from the real world. Doing so helps to make the design and environment feel more natural to the eye, and gives the

viewer something familiar to relate to. And that's just what I did here.

I wanted to give this city a Tokyo-like feel, but with a dominant cylindrical shape. The challenge was to create an effective composition that could show the city, but also convey the story of what people do here and how they live. This approach is explored in one of my

favourite art books that explains composition: *Framed Ink: Drawing and Composition for Visual Storytellers* by Marcos Mateu-Mestre.

Something that helps the composition is its depth, which I achieved by adding repeated elements. This enhances the sense of immersion of the towering walls, and gives the image a nice visual flow.

Artist insight Construct a sci-fi city

Authentic graffiti

I want to make this city look rough around the edges, so I introduce a photo I found online of street art, which was taken in one of Tokyo's suburbs. The shooting angle is a good match with the direction of my city's walkway.



© Anahita Bradberry

Ground details

For the pavement I use a photo texture and set the layer mode to Multiply, so I can keep the light and retain the details by adjusting the levels of my layers. You could also use Lighten mode, depending on the lighting of the scene.



© Anahita Bradberry

RESOURCES WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

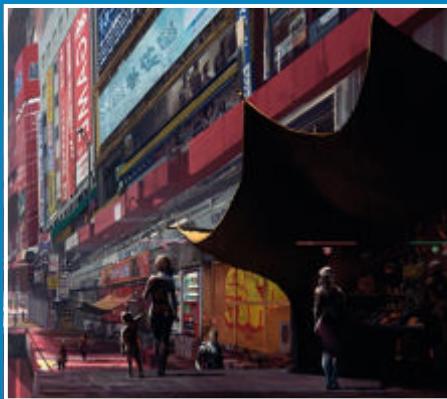
CUSTOM BRUSH: BASIC TEXTURED SQUARE



This brush produces a nice texture and gives me plenty of control over my strokes.

How I create...

A FUTURISTIC CITY WITH A DIFFERENCE



1 Blocking shapes in 3D

I start with simple 3D blocking using basic textures. As I do this, I try to think of all the details that I'll subsequently add to the scene. Anticipating and then solving problems at this early stage will save a significant amount of time later on.

2 Painting on top of the 3D

Now I paint all of the details and add photo textures and references, but I try to keep them as neutral as possible. This means that later on I'll be able to adjust the colours and mood with the greatest amount of control.

3 Lighting and finishing

It's time to set the mood of the piece. Adding atmospheric perspective and doing some colour tweaks will blend all the elements together, enabling me to create the finished look I'm after. I also clean the details of textures by painting over the photos.



Photoshop EXPLORE COLOUR KEYS IN YOUR ART

Artist PROFILE

Jeremy Vickery
COUNTRY: US

 Jeremy is a concept artist and illustrator who specialises in environment design and lighting, but he's also worked as a lighting artist at Pixar, and computer graphics generalist at other studios.
<http://ifxm.ag/jeremyv>

 **GET YOUR RESOURCES**
See page 6 now!

Jeremy Vickery reveals how animators make use of colour keys to help them establish the lighting and mood of a scene

The most important element in a good animated film will always be the story, and everything else should work to support that story. Lighting and colour are often overlooked but very potent tools for helping enhance the emotion of the story and to help draw the viewer's eye to the most important parts of the image. Done well, lighting is felt rather than noticed. Done poorly and the scenes can feel flat, and make the film confusing.

The beauty of filmmaking is a delicate balance of great acting, precise editing, an emotionally moving story that people

can relate to, and of course illustrative visuals that help stir the emotions of the audience.

In this workshop I'm going to cover the idea of painting colour keys and how I approach thinking about colour and mood. I'll use the same composition for each of the paintings, but explore vastly different lighting setups that could convey very different moods.

Many new artists aren't aware of the process of creating colour keys, but in a studio environment they're a vital part of the process. The lighting team at the studio (if it's 3D animation) relies heavily

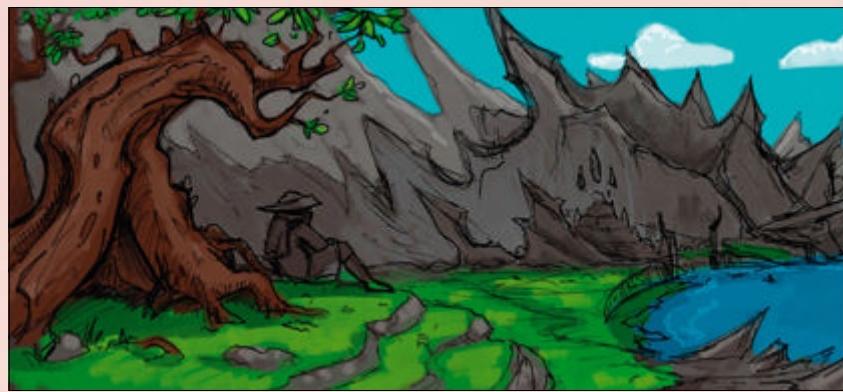
upon colour keys that are defined by the art department and the director of photography. In essence, colour keys are loose sketches that define colour and light for a select set of shots in a film. The focus is far less on shape and details, and more on light and mood.

There's also a concept of a colour script, which is more of a broad plan for the colour in a film, usually done earlier in production before final shots are defined. Colour keys are more shot specific, similar to what I'll be showing in this workshop with a predetermined image. So let's make something beautiful...



1 Create a line sketch

I always start with a loose line sketch on its own layer, to help block in the locations of key items in the composition. If working on an animated film this might be defined from an unlit production frame, but I still usually draw a simple line sketch over the render so I can have it for easier painting.



2 Resist local colour thinking

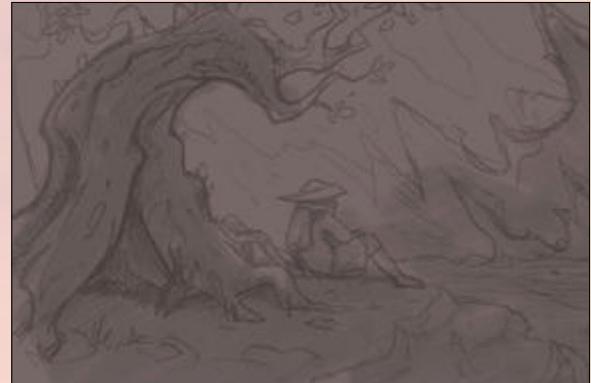
The most common mistake I see with new artists is to only think about local colour (trees are brown, leaves are green, grass is green, sky is blue, rock is grey, water is blue) and then only paint lighter and darker variations of those local colours to mimic light. Don't get trapped! Light is a powerful tool, so try to throw out your assumptions about local colour and only think about light.

Workshops

1 PRO SECRETS

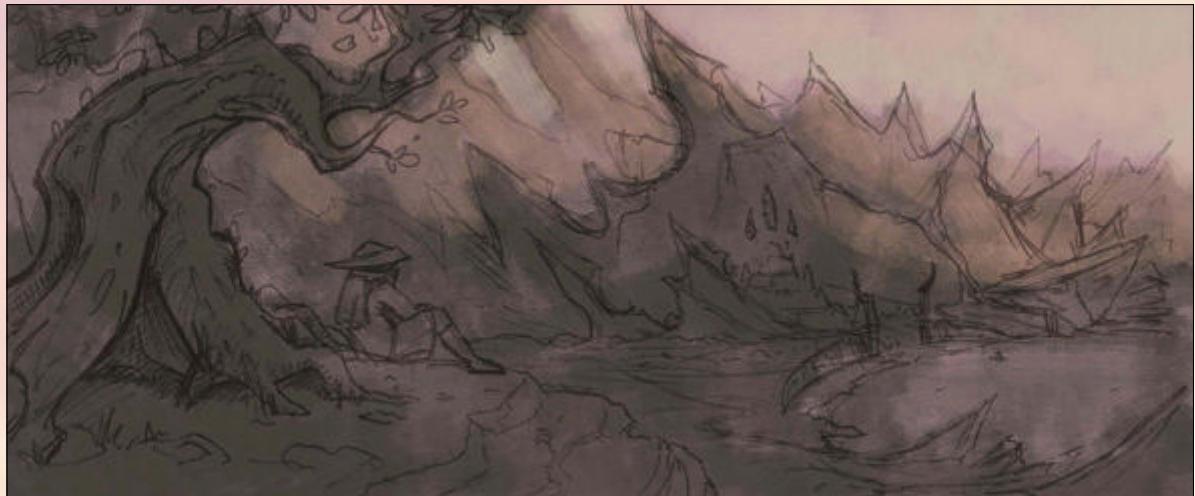
A better Smudge tool

Have you ever wanted to blend colours, but found that the Smudge tool, for want of a better word, sucks? I used Corel Painter for many years and loved the Wet Oily Palette Knife for blending. I discovered that the Mixer Brush tool in Photoshop can blend pixels more like paint. Make sure to adjust the Wet parameter to achieve good results. It's a veritable life-saver for soft blending



3 Reference and research

To create a believable world we need to understand the world around us. I spend time looking for photos and art for colour ideas and inspiration. If I pick well, I can take the colours from images and the ideas of shapes and forms from another to create something new. Here, I take light and colour inspiration from Albert Bierstadt's Rocky Mountain Landscape.



5 Take atmospheric perspective into account

A powerful tool in composition is atmosphere. The farther an object is from the camera, the more air and water particles obscure the light. This provides a way to relate depth in an image, as I paint in more haze the further back the image goes.



1 PRO SECRETS

Two window method

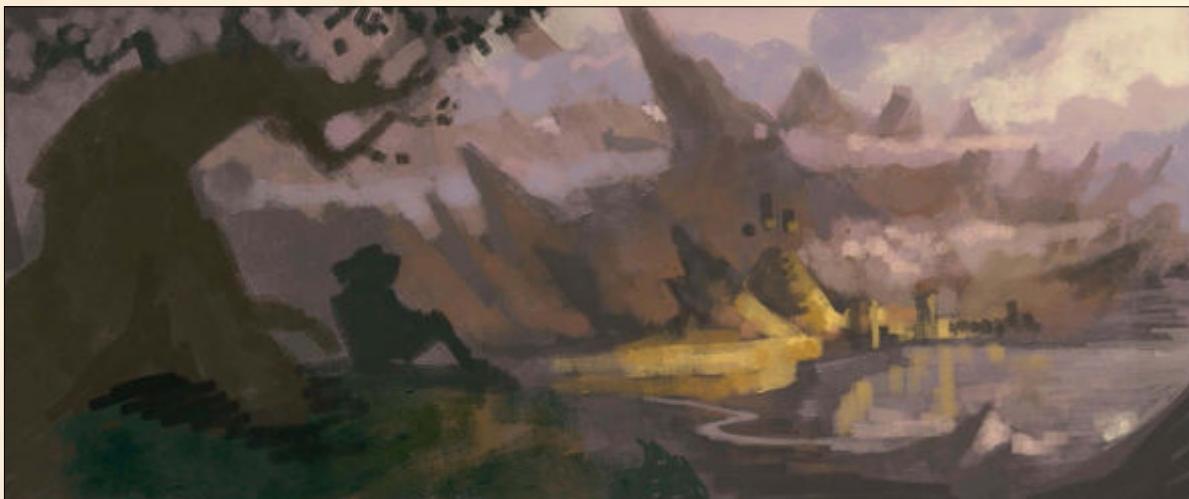
If you go to Window>Arrange>New Window For... it'll create a duplicate floating panel of your Photoshop document. This will enable you to have one window zoomed in for detail work and a second zoomed out to make sure your overall composition is still solid. This saves me a lot of time instead of constantly zooming in and out as I paint.

6 Find the key light

In most lighting setups there's a key light (the brightest light source in the scene) and a fill light (less strong, but fills the overall image). In this painting I decide to make the sunlight (my key) only hit one part of the mountain instead of everywhere. It adds visual interest and draws the viewer's eye to one particular part of the image.

7 Fore-, mid- and background

With less atmosphere near the camera, the darkest parts of the image will always be the most black nearest camera. I spend some time working out a few more details and making the foreground a bit darker, to help make it stand out against the lighter background. Clever layering should make it easy on the eye to take in the image.



WORKSHOP BRUSHES
PHOTOSHOP
CUSTOM BRUSH:
JV_CHAULKY

This is one of my prime brushes for speed painting. It has a great natural texture and good Opacity response.

8 Reflections and removing line sketch

I try hiding the line art layer so I can have a pure colour image. Real objects have no line art around them. I zoom back from my image and squint to see if the composition is working and if the light seems believable. I add some reflections to the lake.



9 Introduce leaves for an extra layer of colour

I love the orange summer leaf colour in the reference image, so I try adding that into my composition, too. The striking red seems to complement the generally warm palette nicely.



10 Local colour picking

I spend some time tightening up key shapes. One tip to remember is to stick to the colours that are already present in the loose sketch. I use the Mac's Option key to quickly switch to the Color Picker tool, enabling me to quickly select local colours that I've already defined, and then can paint with smaller brushes to tighten up shapes.

11 Tightening details

I continue to tighten and refine the image and explore how the clouds might layer in the peaks. When I say tighten, I mean zooming in and painting cleaner edges and finding the final shapes and details. I only use the colours that I've already determined. ➤

Workshops

PRO SECRETS

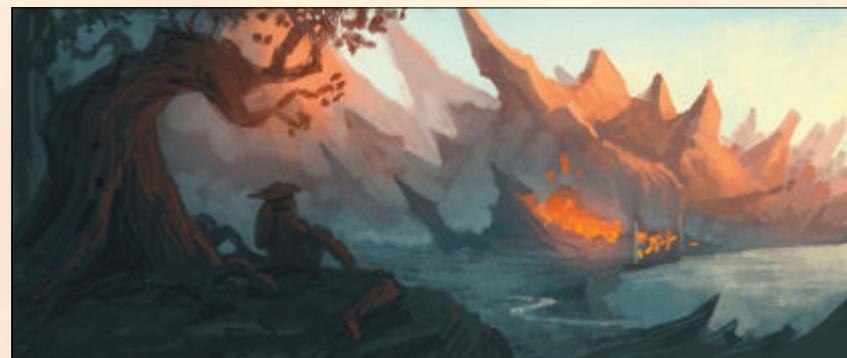
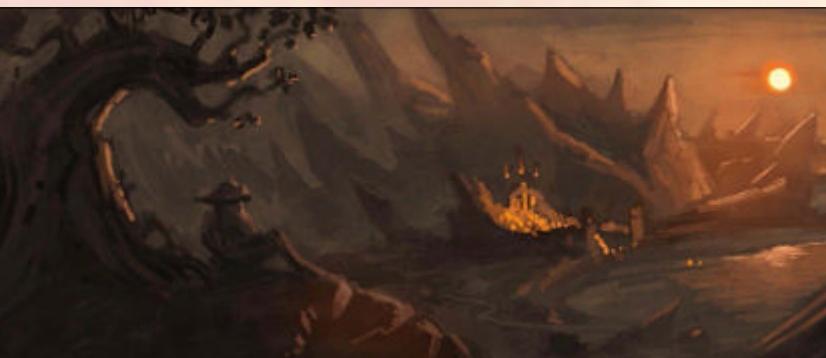
Colour temperature

I always try to think about the colour temperature of lights and not only value, but also hue and saturation. A light bulb turned on slowly will start red, then glow orange, then yellow, then white. I apply the idea to my light sources and shift the hues toward white and loose saturation as lights gain intensity, and gain saturation as they lose intensity.



12 Shrink the character

After looking at the image I realise that the painting might feel more epic if the foreground character was smaller, to make the cliff and tree feel bigger. So I change the little ninja guy. I also tighten a lot of the lines and add some rim lights of sun peaking on the far peaks. I then introduce a lot more detail to the tree leaves and foreground hill.



14 Make six variations of the scene

The nice part about staying loose while painting and not worrying so much about clean lines is that the painting can go very fast. I decide to paint six more versions of this same scene, and some of these take as little as 10 minutes. If you watch the video you can see my process.



A quick way to change the size of your brush in Photoshop.

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Next month in...
NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
ImagineFX
Fantasy
illustration

We reveal the best new artists to follow and brilliant new ways to make money out of art!

ISSUE 125 UK ON SALE Friday 17 July



Featuring...

Fantasy art guide

Discover tips and techniques about the darker side of art, with expert Jim Pavelec.



The new influencers

We choose the finest new artists whose unique visions are reshaping fantasy art.

How to make money

Learn from the artists who are finding different ways to earn from their art work.

Paint like Sargent

Digitally recreate the iconic art style of John Singer Sargent in Photoshop.



Photoshop CREATE A FIGURE FOR ANIMATION



David Adhinarya Lojaya gives you some simple guidelines to help you develop a character from initial sketch to a design ready to be animated

Artist PROFILE

David Adhinarya Lojaya

COUNTRY: Indonesia



David is a freelance visual development artist who focuses on game and animation. He also creates illustrations for children's books.
<http://david.lojaya.com>

GET YOUR RESOURCES

See page 6 now!

PRO SECRETS

Customise your interface

Your interface is like an office work space: you can rearrange it based on your specific needs. In Photoshop, go to Window>Workspace>New workspace and set up your own interface and arrange its tools.

Outstanding, compelling characters are one of the most important aspects of an animated film. An eye-catching character – ideally several – is a must-have in every production.

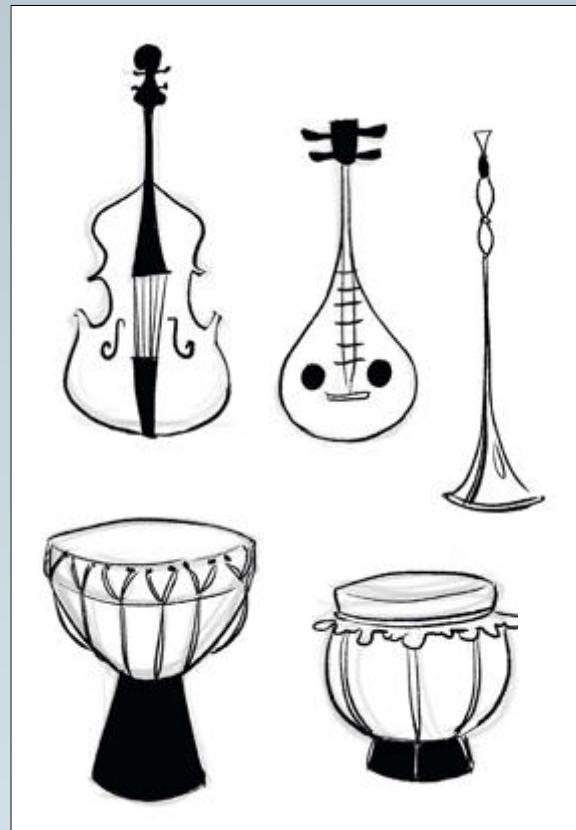
Imagine watching a modern-day animation film with a boring main character. Would your time spent in the cinema be enjoyable? No, and more than likely the film wouldn't do well at the box office – and making animated films

is an expensive business! That's why character design is a key part in the pre-production process of any animated film.

But the great thing about animation, as opposed to a live-action film, is that you have more freedom when designing characters. There are a lot of techniques you can use to make your animated character appear more interesting. You can make the character stand out by their silhouette, or by their unique style, or just simply because of their cute appearance.

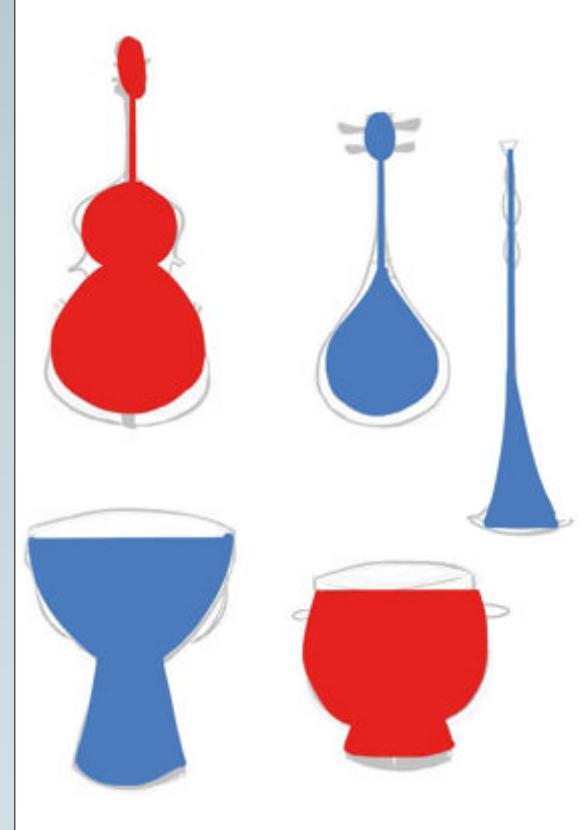
In this workshop, I'll share my process for character design and development with you. The workshop is divided into several simple steps, and my task is to create an original character: a male jazz musician from the 1940s.

I've decided he will have a charming, flirtatious and gentlemanly personality. Basically, he's the regular main character from a vintage musical. But how can I make this character stand out from the crowd? Read on to find out...



1 Understand the client's needs

You don't usually work alone: you need to understand what the art director or client wants. Talk to them and make sure you have the same idea in mind. Once you connect with the concept, then you can start researching. Try not to limit your research to your own subject – you can always brainstorm and come up with totally different ideas and directions.



2 Sketching from basic shapes

I come up with something related to jazz and decide to analyse the basic shapes of some musical instruments. I pick a violin, a lute, drums and a trumpet, then I convert them into their basic shapes. This will help me to develop the core idea of what my character will be.



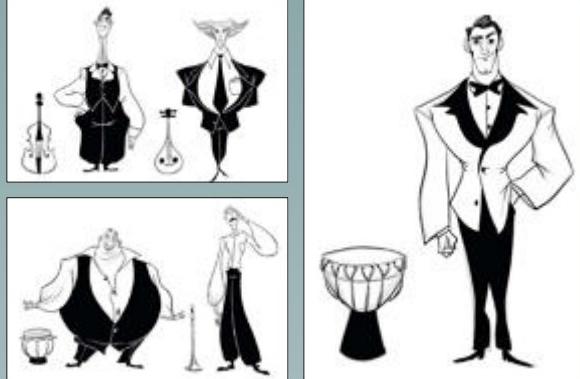
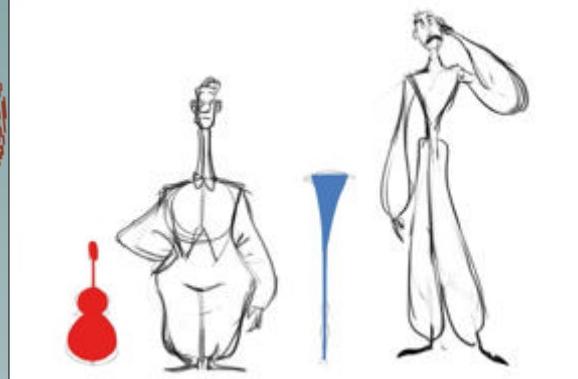
Workshops

Shortcuts

Change Opacity

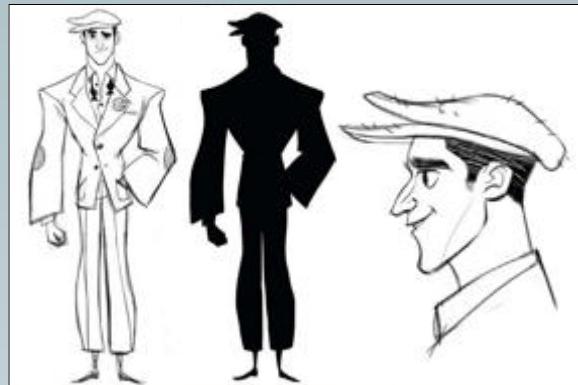
Number keys (PC & Mac)

Quickly change your brush's Opacity, anywhere from 1 to 100 per cent, while in Brush mode.



3 Time to exaggerate!

Now here's the fun part. With those basic shapes, I try to imagine them as if they're a character. I add some eyes, and even whole faces to them. Then I try imagining the lower part of the instrument as the character's body, too. Of course, I can always change their perspective.



4 Simplify your character

I keep the character simple. It's not about textures or accessories here, more about lines and silhouettes. I decrease my character's silhouette until it looks simple, but it's important to add your own drawing style, too. Next, I come up with five characters and then I pick the one who looks the most charming. Now I can play with the face and colours.



5 An effective design approach

Sometimes a design doesn't need a reason to look good. But good design with a meaning is beautiful! It's time to evaluate the character, his design and functions. Ask yourself everything. Why is he wearing a jacket? Why is the bow tie untied? Why is his jacket blue? Always come up with logical answers – your client may ask you the same questions.



7 Produce dynamic poses

Drawing gestures of your character helps to understand their personality. This chap's a jazz musician, so I'm drawing him with a guitar and other instruments. He's also a romantic, and a bit of a flirt. So to get this message across to my audience I need to exaggerate his body gestures and facial expressions.

8 Apply flat colours

After playing with gestures, I put some flat colours on the character. Flat colours help me to get a clearer idea of how he might look in the film. I experiment with a lot of different blues for his clothes, but because he's from the 1940s, I pick the one that has more of a vintage feel to it.



9 Choose poses to render

Now it's time to fully render my man. I usually pick a standing pose, because it tends to result in a more dynamic drawing. I also pick this full-length pose because it shows off a lot of my character's body and clothing, while I feel that his gesture shows off his personality.

10 A solid foundation

I paint in black and white at first, laying a foundation. My approach is something like a 3D render but with a 2D feeling. I'm working in one layer here, but you can use more. I prefer to combine them into one layer because it's easier for my next step.



11 Apply colour to my character

After I'm done with black and white, I add colours on top. I create a new layer and lock it to the black and white layer (press Alt and move your cursor towards the middle of both layers until the cursor changes to the lock icon). I change the layer mode to Multiply and add bright colours, because the Multiply layer will dull down the colours.

12 Finishing details and texture

After this step I usually merge all the Multiply layers and the black and white layer into a single layer to work on. Don't forget to always back up your layers, though. On the single layer, I begin to paint again, adding some textures and details with a custom oil brush.

PRO SECRETS

Liquify time
Mirroring your image is a must, to check your composition. But sometimes you might feel too lazy to redraw some errors. So use Liquify to deform it. Go to Filter>Liquify and use Forward Warp tool to deform, and the Reconstruct tool to undo.



13 Paint more poses

Producing more paintings of a character will help a client understand my design choices. So I paint some more poses, trying to do different painting styles each time. Since he's from the 1940s, I depict him as if he's starring in a film noir.

14 Compiling the designs

When finishing up, I like to compile everything into a presentable portfolio. I bring them together and pick the best from the sketches and paintings. The simplest ones are usually better, but it depends on the subject matter, too. I clean up the sketches and redraw some of the messy ones. Now my charming musician is ready to hit the silver screen!



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ImagineFX

Reviews



Artist's Choice Award

Art resources with a five-star rating receives the ImagineFX Artist's Choice award!

The latest digital art resources are put to the test by the ImagineFX team...



HARDWARE

90 NX500 compact camera

With 28 million pixels and a great focusing system, this versatile Samsung camera manages to capture the sharp detail artists need.



SOFTWARE

93 Pixelmator

If Adobe's big hitter is beyond your budget, this alternative to Photoshop is a lot cheaper and very capable.

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This free, open-source software is worth a look if you're happy to use it alongside other art programs.



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Master illustrator James Gurney educates and delights with an in-depth look at how he created two paintings for Scientific American.



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Fables: Covers by James Jean; The Art and Making Of Penny Dreadful; Harry Potter: Magical Places From The Films.

RATINGS EXPLAINED Magnificent Good Ordinary Poor Atrocious



NX500 compact camera

BIG SHOT With 28 million pixels and a great focusing system, this versatile camera gets all the sharp detail artists will need

MAC
&
PC

Price £599 (with 16-50mm lens) **Company** Samsung **Web** www.samsung.com

Cameraphones and pocket-sized compact cameras are great in some situations, but when you want to capture lots of fine detail and a wide tonal range in your photo references you're better off with a camera with a bigger sensor.

The NX500 is a great choice for artists, because it's fairly small, yet has the same-sized sensor as found in many SLRs. It can also accept

interchangeable lenses and with 28.2 million effective pixels, it's capable of recording a huge amount of detail. What's more, it can shoot continuously at up to nine frames per second for 40 JPEGs or five RAW files, when images are saved on a UHS-I SD card.

There's also a wide sensitivity range and visual noise is controlled well, so you're able to shoot in a wide range of lighting conditions. The autofocus system does a great job with moving

or stationary subjects in good light. It gets a bit slower when light levels drop, but it's still usable.

Although the NX500 doesn't have a viewfinder it's got a superb three-inch, 1,036,000-dot Super AMOLED screen that's touch-sensitive and mounted on a tilting bracket. This enables you to tip it up or down, making it easier to see when you're shooting above or below head-height or shooting a selfie. The level of detail visible in the screen is very impressive – it makes you want to take photos because scenes look so good! The only downside is that it's hard to see an image in very bright light if you're looking from side-on.

There are quite a few buttons and dials on the camera, but it's pretty easy to get to grips with using it. The touch control is implemented brilliantly, so it won't be long before you're tapping away, making settings changes or swiping through images.

In the default settings the NX500 generally produces natural, vibrant



In the default settings images have attractive, vibrant colours.



Thanks to its class-leading 28Mp sensor the NX500 captures lots of detail.

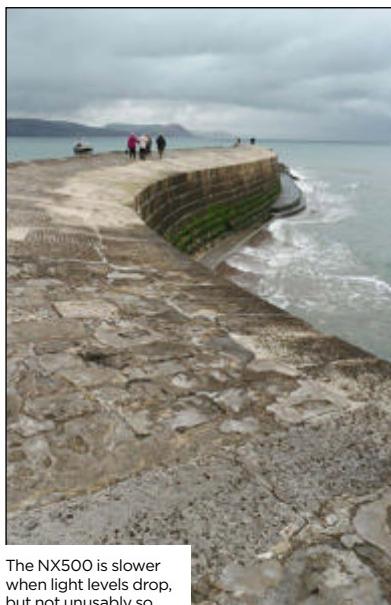


“The level of detail in the screen is very impressive – it makes you want to take photos because scenes look so good”

colours. But very occasionally some subjects, such as red flowers, can give the automatic white balance system problems and it's best to switch to an alternative setting such as Daylight.

You can play with image colour using the Picture Wizard settings, taking control of the saturation of the red, green and blue channels as well as overall saturation, sharpness, contrast and hue. Helpfully, you can record RAW files at the same time as JPEGs, so if you don't like what you've done with the Picture Wizard, you still have a file with all the colour data to play with.

In summary, the NX500 is a great camera that has just about everything you could want apart from a viewfinder. It has plenty of features and control to offer experienced users as well as automatic options for artists looking for their first serious camera.



IN FOCUS AND FOR A LITTLE LESS...

Here are three more affordable alternatives to the NX500



Olympus OM-D E-M10

Web www.olympus.com

Price £499, comes supplied with 14-42mm kit lens

It lacks the NX500's resolution, but this 16Mp camera has a viewfinder, a touch-sensitive tilting screen, high image quality and many customisation options.



Fujifilm X-A2

Web www.fujifilm.com

Price £379, comes supplied with 16-50mm kit lens

Its metal construction gives this 16Mp APS-C format camera a very high quality, robust feel and although this doesn't extend to the kit lens, it's still capable of capturing lots of sharp detail.



Panasonic Lumix DMC-GM1

Web www.panasonic.com

Price £327, comes supplied with 12-32mm kit lens

A really small camera with great image quality. Like all cameras here, Wi-Fi connectivity means you can share images quickly via a smartphone.

DETAILS

Features

- APS-C format sensor
- 28.2 million pixels
- NX lens mount
- 414 AF points
- 4K movies
- SD/SDHC/SDXC
- 9fps
- Wi-Fi, NFC and Bluetooth
- 3-inch, 1,036,000-dot touchscreen
- 292g (body only)

System Requirements

PC: Windows 7, 8 or 8.1

Mac: OS 10.7 or higher

Rating

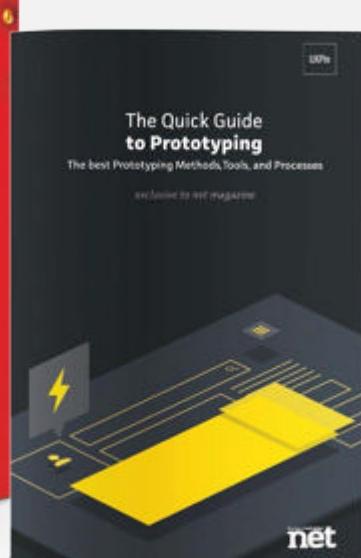


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Lord of Elemental's detailed manga creation makes great use of MyPaint's infinite canvas.



MyPaint

FREE HAND This free open-source software takes on the big art guns

Price Free

Company InTiLinux

Web wwwmypaint.intilinux.com

RATING

Linux artists aren't spoilt for choice: neither Adobe nor Corel offer their software on the free operating system. Fortunately, GIMP has Photoshop-esque image editing covered, but for a Painter-esque experience you have to look at the brilliant Krita, or MyPaint.

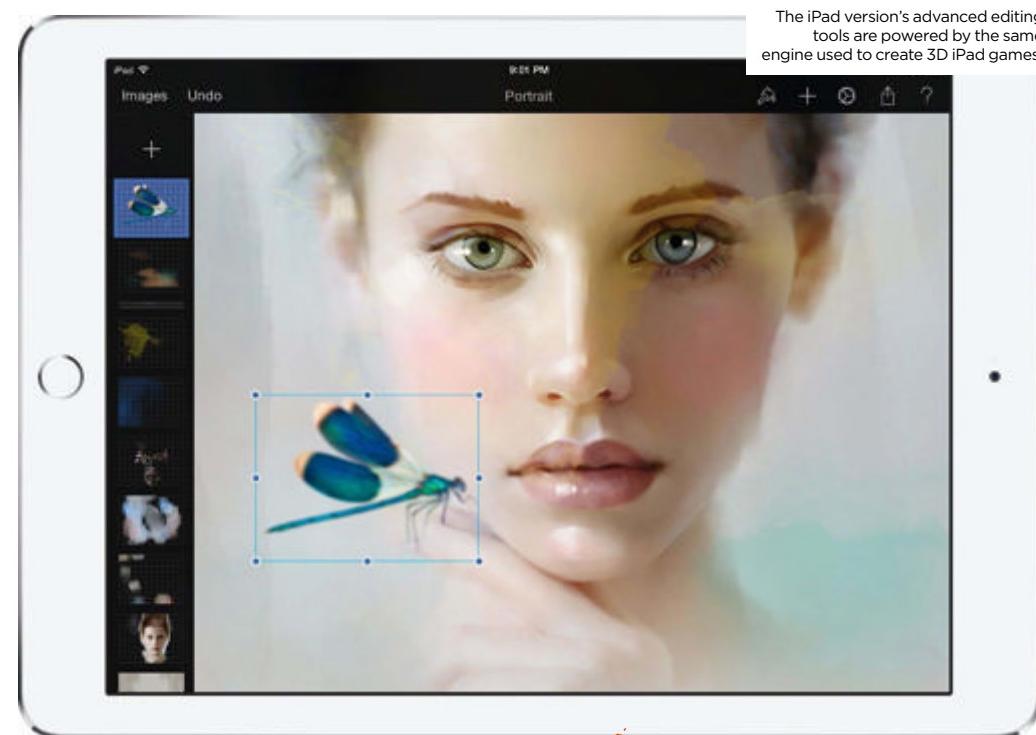
MyPaint comes packed with brushes, from clean and defined ink to messy watercolours, all of which work beautifully with a stylus. Neat features include an infinite canvas, much like Mischief's, so you can make your creations as tall and wide – or as small and focused – as your imagination allows. It's not quite as polished as Krita, but you can still achieve similar end results.

If there's an elephant in the room it's the lack of selection tools, so you have to go back-and-forth between MyPaint and GIMP if you want to clone or rearrange said elephant. It's also pretty much Linux-only: the Windows version hasn't been updated for ages and is so basic it's best ignored. The Mac version is a buggy unofficial port with no pressure-sensitivity support.

This is a good package for Linux newbies to try their hand at digital painting before moving into the more advanced world of Krita.



Artist Griatch uses MyPaint for sketching and colouring, and GIMP for the finishing touches.



The iPad version's advanced editing tools are powered by the same engine used to create 3D iPad games.

Pixelmator

iPad & Mac

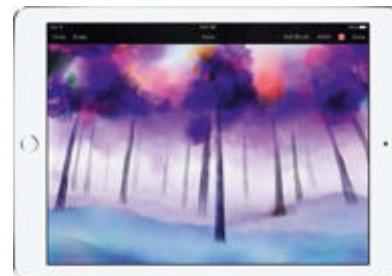
PHOTOSHOPPED OUT If Adobe's big hitter is beyond your budget, this alternative is cheaper and just as good

Price £23 (Mac) £4 (iPad) **Company** Pixelmator Team **Web** www.pixelmator.com

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery then Photoshop creator Adobe must be positively blushing. Boot up Pixelmator and it looks very familiar, with a slate-grey colour scheme, and floating tool menus, palettes and effects. Drill down through the menus and you'll see familiar commands such as Transform and Stroke. Regular users of Adobe's software will feel right at home here, and it even supports Photoshop's prevalent PSD file format for those looking to jump ship.

But Pixelmator has a distinct advantage over Photoshop: it's ridiculously easy to use. The icons are chunky and bold so you can work out exactly what the Eye Dropper or the Brush will do before you've clicked it. There are quick fixes available for red eyes and a repair tool for rapid removals, while more complicated image additions such as vectors, reflections and gradients are easily achieved by novices.

As with Photoshop, Pixelmator also has a dinky version of its software in an iPad version. It's wisely been built from the ground up to work with the iPad,



The iPad version includes wonderful watercolour brushes, perfect for dabbling in digital plein air.

DETAILS

Features

- Over 40 tools
- Layer-based image editing
- 64-bit architecture
- 13 colour-correction tools
- Compatible with PSD (with layers), JPEG, TIFF, PNG, WebP, PDF, GIF, BMP, TGA, JPG-2000
- More than 100 effects
- Advanced brush settings and Photoshop brush support
- Transparent HUD
- Automator actions
- ColorSync Support

System Requirements

iPad: iOS 8.1 or later
Mac: OS X 10.9.5 or later, 64-bit processor

Rating



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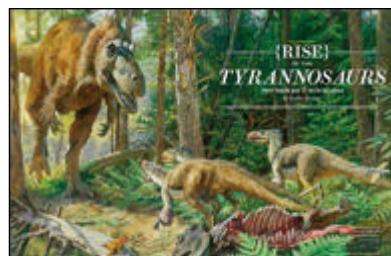


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Thumbnail and value studies lead to a colour study James can show to the art director.



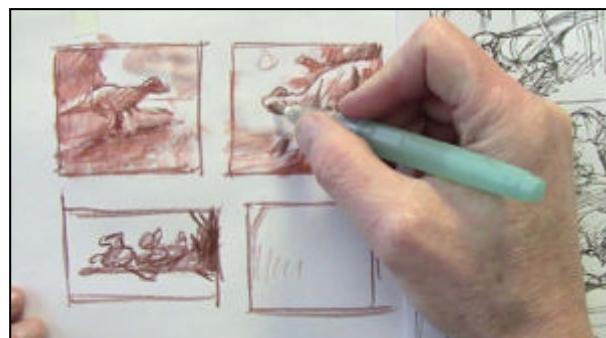
After a plein-air study of a nearby tree, James adds edge lighting to the woods in his picture.



The video reveals the days of research and preparation that went into these pieces.



An extensive catalogue of reference helps James to achieve more realistic results.



Tyrannosaurs: Behind The Art

DINOSAUR KING Master illustrator James Gurney educates and delights with an in-depth look at how he created two paintings for Scientific American magazine

Publisher James Gurney **Price** \$15 **Format** Download **Web** www.jamesgurney.com

Even though dinosaurs have been extinct for 66 million years we're still discovering new species.

Twenty types of tyrannosaur, all cousins to the iconic T. rex, have come to light in the past decade-and-a-half, for example.

When the magazine Scientific American commissioned James Gurney to create a cover and interior illustration of these 'newcomers' he decided to film his process. The resulting production joins a small but high-quality series of videos James has built up over the past few years.

Tyrannosaurs is less a training video, more a fully fledged documentary – though there are plenty of techniques to glean. James covers themes that will be instantly familiar to devotees of his books and other videos. Chiefly, the challenge of taking an imagined scene, whether from ancient history or purely from your imagination, and convincing the viewer it could be real.



DETAILS

- Topics covered**
- Thumbnails and sketches
- Colour and value studies
- Using photo and model reference
- Oil- and water-based media
- Tone and texture
- Working with light

Length

40 minutes

Rating



You'll see, for example, how James refers to modern animals to deduce how long-extinct creatures might have looked. More dinosaurs than we'd previously thought had some feathers, so James makes a detailed comparison of fur and feathers in today's world to establish where they might have been and how they may have looked.

James has perfected the trick of packing in lots of information without ever making his presentation feel heavy. Given that his various videos cover broadly similar ground (this is his third about painting dinosaurs), anyone who's bought all his videos to date will inevitably find less new information here – although it's frankly so enjoyable to watch that it's debatable to what extent this matters.

If you're less familiar with James's work, you'll gain invaluable insights into making colour and value studies, painting with oil- and water-based media, researching your scene and much more – and have fun doing it.

ARTIST PROFILE

JAMES GURNEY

James specialises in painting realistic images of scenes that can't be photographed, from dinosaurs to ancient civilisations. He's also a plein air painter and sketcher, believing that making studies from observation fuels his imagination. James taught himself to draw by reading books about Norman Rockwell and Howard Pyle. He received a degree in anthropology at the University of California, but chose a career in art. James has written the instruction books *Imaginative Realism* and *Color and Light*.



www.gurneyjourney.blogspot.com



Fables: Covers by James Jean

STORY TIME The unsung hero of the Fables success story takes his last bow with a bedazzling collection of fantasy art

Author James Jean **Publisher** Titan Books **Price** £25 **Web** www.titanbooks.com **Available** Now

This is not the first release collecting together the exquisite cover designs of Taiwan-born, US West Coast artist James Jean. But if the insistence is true – that the Fables series really has been drawn to an absolute conclusion after 13 years – it may well be the ultimate collection.

With small-screen adaptation potential headed off by the likes of Grimm and Once Upon A Time, this may be it for Snow, Bigby Wolf and their brutal and sexy Fables kind. But then it wasn't truly unique to bring together figures from literature and mythology in a gritty, adult narrative – it just so happens Fables caught the concept from just the right angle, and found a vast, adoring following.



James Jean's striking cover for Fables #75, War & Pieces.



Bound in muted greys though it is, this update is a deserving tribute to James' years of compelling artistry, considering how up-front credit and praise for the hit series has always gone primarily to creator Bill Willingham and artists Lan Medina, Mark Buckingham, Steve Leialoha and Craig Hamilton.

James has followed in their wake, but in the process, honed their strips into brilliantly accomplished standalone art. The breadth of artistic style displayed throughout the book is impressive, from vibrant cartoon to mournful old master to dazzling manga – and although the lack of cover context for any but the most clued-in Fables fan is slightly regrettable, the quality of his vision for each and every issue makes this a worthy perusal, even if you're more of a Grimm fan.

With each spread laid out by James himself, what commentary we do get to accompany each cover is worth its weight in faerie dust – such as the artist's voluntary admission that he largely suggested wraparound covers to earn a bit more money, or Willingham's direction for the first appearance of Flycatcher that he



James's cover art Fables #76, Around The Town. He won six Eisner Awards for his Fables covers.

should resemble "Alan Moore at his most visually maniacal".

Nonetheless, Willingham's attempts to wring any telling observations out of James in the afterword interview only speak volumes by their failure: James insists he's, "Merely an artist... My physical body is divorced from my body of work". He concludes, gnomically: "The association between the two is uncomfortable for me."

By all means get hold of a copy, but don't expect to get it autographed by the gifted but shy cover artist.

RATING

The Art and Making Of Penny Dreadful

THE PENNY DROPS The greatest monsters of English literature walk the streets of London once again... or is it Dublin?

Author Sharon Gosling **Publisher** Titan Books **Price** £20 **Web** www.titanbooks.com **Available** Now

When Penny Dreadful first drifted on to our screens, reeking of cholera and carbolic soap, it seemed like another grimy fin de siècle drama; Ripper Street crossed with American Horror Story. However, the quality of the production, from conception to the last digital stroke of the brush, has seen it surpass any prejudices, and the horror is shifting up another gear in its second season.

Much of this is down to creator, American writer and Gladiator and



Seeking an original take, artist Howard Swindell was tasked with conceiving the vampire.



Skyfall scribe John Logan, and the power invested in him by Sam Mendes. The lush attention to detail demanded by both run all the way through this luxuriant Making Of, which may be to some extent pieced together from press-kits, but fans of the show won't be disappointed, with the author's step-by-step investigation into each major aspect of production, enveloped in an gorgeously embossed cover.

The content doesn't focus entirely on art and design. The exploration of the techniques used to turn modern Dublin into Victorian London provide plenty for lovers of screen magic to sink their fangs into - and to celebrate the artistry of every costume, poster and splash of Kensington gore feels like time well invested.

RATING

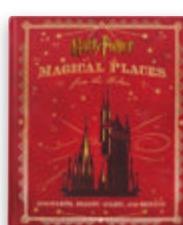
Harry Potter: Magical Places From The Films

MUGGLES' GUIDE Just when you thought that every single book with the words 'Harry Potter' on it had been published...

Author Jody Revenson **Publisher** Titan Books **Price** £25 **Web** www.titanbooks.com **Available** Now

The long decade of Harry Potter film production inspired a whole raft of books exploring the translation of JK Rowling's prose into cinematic smashes, and even years after the entire narrative wrapped, Titan has more to offer us - this being the new follow-up to its recent *Creatures of Potter* release.

Those who will buy any package of pages with the Harry Potter name on will heed no opinion on the quality of this new exploration of the series'



Art by Andrew Williamson for a scene that was never filmed.



locations either way, but non-completingists would not be wasting their money, either. Admittedly, the one most goose-pimple-inducing reproduction in the entire book is JK Rowling's own original biro sketch of the Hogwarts grounds, followed as gospel by the designers from that day forward. However, with nearly 20 hours of screen magic to analyse, there's very little dead space in the 200 pages.

Spoilers, of course, abound as the stand-out locations from all eight films are detailed, from exquisitely painted concept to digital magic. The only less-than-magical note is the odd inclusion of an envelope containing a sketch of Diagon Alley and extra pamphlets, where a glossy Hogwarts map would have been the perfect final touch.

RATING

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FANTASY

illustrator

HOW TO CREATE MOTION EFFECTS IN INK

Socar Myles shares her inking technique as she depicts sparrows in flight

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The best traditional art revealed.



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David Colman talks satisfaction.



FXPosé Traditional

SHOWCASING THE FINEST TRADITIONAL FANTASY ARTISTS

1 Belinda Jane Morris

LOCATION: Australia
WEB: www.belindailustrates.com
EMAIL: belindailustrates@gmail.com
MEDIA: Watercolours, gouache and ink



Belinda is busy building on a career at a children's book illustrator. Taking inspiration from Pre-Raphaelites like

JW Waterhouse and the Golden Age Illustrators such as Arthur Rackham, Belinda starts her drawings with "a ridiculous amount of research and concept sketches." She then creates her dreamy fantasy paintings by layering watercolours over fixatives, "since watercolour can be a tricky medium it can take a number of layers to build it up," she says.

"Sometimes I'll transfer the drawing on to another piece of watercolour paper or I'll start doing washes on the original drawing after having scanned it and sprayed it lightly with fixative."

14



TAP FOR GALLERY

Belinda Jane Morris

1 MOONLIGHT CONVERSATIONS

Watercolour and gouache, 10x15in

"What if dragons were real? I imagined an Edwardian culture when the English were fascinated with Orientalism and tea was popular. Chinese Dragons would be both the mascots and guardians of teas production and consumption. I also imagined that the Tea Dragons would be a lady's best friend, keeping the tea warm once poured, guarding a lady's secrets from gossips, transferring messages to lovers and providing companionship."

2 THE RESCUE

Watercolour, ink and gouache, 12x17in

"This is my take on the moment of rescue where The Little Mermaid rescues her prince. Whether she's bringing him to the surface or dragging him under is up to your own interpretation!"

2+



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"What a great idea to tie the existence of dragons into something as quintessentially British as drinking tea! Belinda's unfussy painting style is perfectly suited to this genteel, moonlit scene."

Beren Neale,
Commissioning Editor

Kelly McKernan

LOCATION: US
WEB: www.kellymckernan.com
EMAIL: kellycavannah@gmail.com
MEDIA: Watercolour



Kelly has been working as a full-time fine artist and freelance illustrator since 2012. The Tennessee artist regularly shows her original watercolour paintings with galleries, takes private commissions, and has recently been taking advantage of Nashville's music scene by creating album artwork for local musicians.

"My work continues to evolve and grow," she says, "but some underlying themes I like to explore in my personal work are femininity, self-awareness, and symbiotic relationships with nature."

1 AUGURY

Watercolour, 12x16in

"This piece is my depiction of a banshee, created for a fantastical-beasts themed show at Arch Enemy Arts. It's quite a bit darker than my usual work and I loved stepping outside of my comfort zone for it."

2 HARBINGER

Watercolour, 16x20in

"This piece was a massive challenge, mainly in size and detail. The idea came from an initial sketch of the pose, which reminded me of a harpy. The entire piece took about 50 hours, and my favourite detail is the crack in the egg."

3 PROVENANCE

Watercolour, 11x14in

"This piece is the result of a private commission where the patron chose a word to inspire the piece. I wanted to try an unconventional colour scheme to contrast the delicacy of the figure with the subject matter."

4 VESTIGE

Watercolour, acrylic and mica powder, 14x20in

"This piece was created in an effort to combine watercolour and acrylic with mica powders. I enjoyed working on a landscape piece since much of my other work adopt a portrait orientation."

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14



TAP FOR GALLERY

Kelly McKernan



Creative Space



HEY YOU!

Are you a part of a regular art class or group? Email us at mail@imaginefx.com if you want to feature here!

JOY ART CLUB

WINNIE DAVIES brings happiness to Hong Kong, sharing her studio in a part of the world where living room, let alone an art space, comes at a premium

Established in 2006, Winnie Davies began Hong Kong-based meetup Joy Art Club after discovering a lack of affordable spaces for artists to create. "Property prices are too expensive, so few artists can afford to have a studio," she says. She owned a studio space and made the decision to open it up, so other artists could enjoy using it.

Winnie has a large range of attendees to her open classes. "Some regular attendees are amateur artists who have to work during the day, some are just beginners who want to learn how to draw or paint," she says. "Some people are designers or artists who can't afford their own studio, so I provide my studio for them to use

and practise their skills. Most people hear about it by word of mouth."

Winnie runs regular workshops and tuition from her studio, ranging from oil painting lessons to Chinese painting and life drawing. Every Saturday she arranges both female and male nudes to study from, and teaches people of all nationalities the ancient art of Chinese calligraphy. Oil painting proves popular with the younger crowd and draws in students as young as four years old. Private art lessons can also be arranged with her; "I have found that many people in Hong Kong want to learn about art, and learn how to draw and paint."

As well as this, Winnie is keen to promote art in Hong Kong, and opens her



Joy Art Club provides different art lessons and workshops for people to learn and enjoy art.

space to the public annually. "The idea of Open Studio is to nurture art in Hong Kong and teach the public about the importance of art."

With an ever-growing following, Winnie remains flexible to people's needs. "Most people are too busy working long hours, so I can't expect them to come every week. I hope more people will attend regularly. That's why it's the Joy Art Club, because it provides joy and fun for people to enjoy art!"

 **Winnie's studio is open every Saturday as the Joy Art Club, but she's always willing to accommodate art lovers like herself. Check out her website for more information. www.joyartclub.com**

Creative Space Joy Art Club



Claudia (left) has fun learning the art of Chinese painting. Originally from Spain, she proves you don't have to be Chinese to master the ancient craft!



Oil painting, life drawing, Chinese painting, Chinese calligraphy and sculpture lessons are provided regularly in the Joy Art Club.



Besides using her studio for her own art creation, Winnie's art space is open to the public every Saturday.

SHARED SPACE

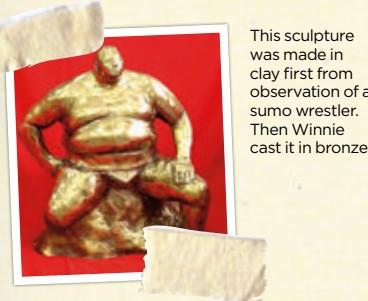
Winnie shares her expertise to help nurture art in Hong Kong...



Winnie's painting was made from a observational sketch of a female nude.



Bianka learned how to write her name in Chinese calligraphy, thanks to Winnie's guidance and enthusiasm.



This sculpture was made in clay first from observation of a sumo wrestler. Then Winnie cast it in bronze.



Winnie uses life-drawing sketches for the basis of her paintings.

Workshops



See page 6 now!



Pen Ink

CREATE MOTION EFFECTS IN INK

SOCAR MYLES demonstrates an inking technique that favours value over line, to create beautiful lighting and motion effects

My illustration career began with a portfolio filled with digital painting. There's no end to what can be done with a computer. I enjoyed it at first: after all, learning something new is always a blast. But after a couple of years, I realised I'd never quite got used to looking at the screen, while drawing on a plastic tablet in my lap.

Worse still, my poor colour perception was getting in the way. People kept describing my work as "monochromatic." It was supposed to be bright and cheerful. I wasn't getting the idea across. So, rather than despairing, I decided to embrace the monochrome entirely. I cleared out my portfolio and returned to something that had served me well in the past: a pen.

Pen and ink has always been my favourite medium: not only is it conveniently cheap, but I like everything about it, from the way it gives me precise control over every dot and whorl, to the

MATERIALS

PAPER

- Canson Mi-Teintes paper in Pearl Grey
- A roll of tracing paper

PEN

- Koh-i-noor pen holder, with Speedball Hunt Artist Pen 100 nibs

INK

- Speedball Super Black India Ink

OTHER:

- Photoshop (for the value study)

feel of the nib as it scratches the tooth of the paper.

When I draw, I try to present the world the way I perceive it, rather than the way it really is. I don't want to show people what was there in front of me: I want to force them to see what I saw, get the feelings I got, maybe think some of the same thoughts. I usually forget to wear my specs, so the world I see is a bit blurry, a bit dreamy, and filled with details my brain has inserted, to make up for what I can't quite make out.

I like to add things that aren't there when I draw from life or from memory: these things stand in for the thoughts that crossed my mind, while I admired the scene in front of me. It sounds arrogant, but I want everyone to understand the whole experience, from my perspective: what was there, and what I thought of it.

Every morning, just after sunrise, I sit on the steps just outside my building and watch the neighbourhood wake up. I get



most of my ideas from doing this. I see weird-looking people; I draw them. I see a bird I can't identify; I draw that, and put it on Facebook, and hope someone identifies it for me. I stare blankly into space, seeing nothing, mind wandering; I draw that, as well.

Socar lives in Canada, and likes to draw things that can be found in the great Canadian outdoors, like birds, flowers, lost trinkets, roots and trees, garbage and pedestrians. www.gorblimey.com

In depth Motion effects in ink





1 The initial idea

Birds move too fast to make out much detail. I know they have wings, feathers and beaks, but I see horrible little typhoons of feathers and bird dandruff, hurtling about the sky. This strikes me as hilarious and beautiful in equal measure. Light plus bird dandruff equals... fairy dust. Maybe.



2 Combining sketches

I like to sketch on tracing paper. Because it's translucent, I can combine elements from several sketches into one, or move them around to experiment with composition. Tracing paper is also one of the cheapest papers, so it's okay to waste some.



3 Creating a digital value study

This simple digital value study helps me remember where the focal points are, and which shapes should stand out. I particularly want to make sure I echo the shapes of the birds' feet in the branches of the trees, and use curves of foliage to create an arc for the eye to follow.

**COMPUTER TIP
USING A PRINTER**
No pencil? Print out a digital sketch, very faintly. Make sure your printer has a black cartridge, not just CMY.



4 Taking care with the edges

I want these birds to look like they're flying. To this end, I'll draw the birds and the scene behind them at the same time, using tiny dots and lines to create soft transitions between the two. Paying close attention to edges also helps prevent unsightly halos of black or white around objects.



5 Boosting the illusion of movement

Where one bird's wing crosses another's body, I use cast shadow to separate the two. I draw the soft, faint texture of the rear bird's body, where the shadow falls, instead of drawing an outline, to preserve the illusion of movement. Outlines are better for moments frozen in time, like in photographs.

6 Introducing texture

I draw tiny, overlaid circles and semicircles to create soft value changes that suggest distant clumps of leaves. To achieve the scratchy texture of tree bark, I wipe most of the ink off my nib, let it dry a little, and then scratch the tacky ink on to the paper. For scraggly feathers, little wavy lines do the trick.



7 Enhance the lighting in the image

To create a dream-like atmosphere, I let the starlight reflect more brightly than it should on the metal ornaments that are hanging from the tree. I add sparkling constellations to areas that I want to draw attention to, such as the birds' feet. I leave edges facing the light source especially blurry, to make them glow.



8 Composition tricks

In the grasping branches, I echo the shapes of the birds' claws. I use the arcs of the long branches and the interaction between the birds' legs, tails and wings to lead the viewer's gaze. I arrange the stars in loose circles, so the sky doesn't become stagnant or confusing.

9 Directing the eye

On the left, the trailing boughs frame the face of the largest bird, and draws the eye down to the perch and then back into the picture. At the bottom right, the birds' perch extends out of the scene and into the border. I do this to tie the separate elements together.

ARTIST INSIGHT

COVER IT UP

Always cover the areas of the drawing you're not currently working on. This cuts down on ink spatter damage, and keeps your skin oils off the page. Use tape to hold the cover paper in place.



ARTIST INSIGHT

LIGHTEN UP

You can always add more ink, but you can't take any away. When you want a subtle texture, like the one I've used on the birds' wings, start light and build up slowly.



10 Putting in the details

I want the grass to look soft, so instead of outlining each blade, I draw the shadows beneath them. If you find it hard to do this, or don't know where to put the shadows, pencil the lines in, but shade the spaces between them instead of tracing over them.

11 Tackling the border

I associate birds with avarice, because they like to steal shiny stuff. Once a flock of crows stole all the polished pebbles out of my planter. So I gave the border a jewels-and-expensive-fabric theme. A little drop shadow separates overlapping elements of the main image from the border.

PAPER TIP

WATCH THAT TOOTH!
The heavier the tooth of your paper, the more its texture will show. Use smoother paper for greater precision.



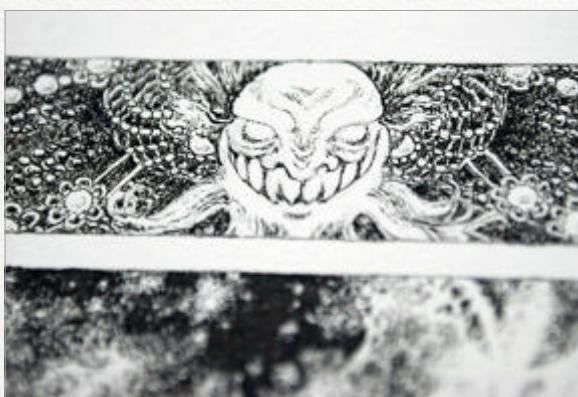
12 Having a bit of fun with the painting

The border is full of detail, but its main purpose is to create a band of about 75 per cent grey around the image, like the mat would do in a frame. Nobody will look that closely, so you can put anything there. I put a secret message in mine.



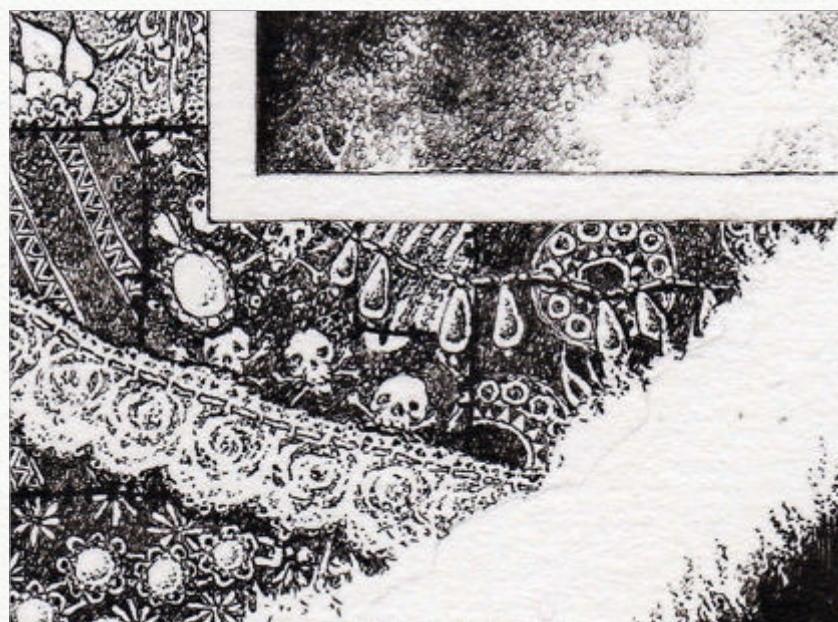
13 Creating focus

Although the border's just a frame, it needs some little focal points to keep it from looking messy. I use a ruler to find the middle of the top bar and put a gargoyle there. The matching swags of lace on the left and right of the bottom bar serve the same purpose.



14 Managing contrast

To keep the level of detail in the border from becoming overpowering, I keep the contrast comparatively low, by using either very few areas of 100 per cent black or 100 per cent white. I often use areas of fairly uniform texture or pattern to create value. The details themselves aren't that important.



15 Any mistakes?

I stand back from my drawing board and look for mistakes in my artwork. Did I miss anything? How does it look from a distance? Close up? What can I do better next time? However, I don't bother to erase the pencil lines. They are part of the picture and I like people to be able to see how I did it.



ARTIST INSIGHT

IMAGINE IT!
You don't have to draw every feather, every leaf, every strand of hair: draw a few, and the brain fills in the rest. Which few should you draw? The ones that frame or define important shapes.

Pencil

UNDERSTANDING SKELETONS

In part two of the series on drawing animals, **BRYNN METHENEY** shows how getting a skeleton's general shape and gesture correct will help with the proportions

We warmed up last issue with our general to specific animal drawing lesson. Now we can move into really understanding the structures and systems underneath an animal's skin.

Skeletons are the structures that help keep us and all other animals together. Vertebrate anatomy is centred on the spine. From this structure stems our scapula, our pelvis, our arms and our legs. The more we draw skeletons of other

vertebrate animals, the more we realise how similar we are and how, really, it's just the proportions that are exaggerated between species.

Using a harder lead at first helps keep initial skeleton gestures light. This is important. We want to only map out our basic shapes and posture. I'm constantly comparing sizes and shapes. Sometimes skulls are almost as large as scapula. Femurs can be as long as rib cages.

As we begin to build our skeleton, we use heavier pencil leads. HB will help us

MATERIALS

- 2H, HB, B Caran d'Ache Grafwood pencils
- Kneaded eraser
- Acid-free sketchbook paper

GET YOUR RESOURCES

See page 6 now!

solidify the general line quality and shapes and the B pencil will finalise details. Keep those pencils sharp and dull; variety is good here.

Drawing the skeleton from the ground up like this can help you quickly flesh it out to a point where it will be useful.



Brynn specialises in creature design, fantasy illustration and visual development for film, games and publishing. She lives and works in Oakland, California.

www.brynnart.com

The bison's skeleton features very large thoracic vertebrae that arch over the shoulder blades. It's important to take these features into consideration early in your drawing.

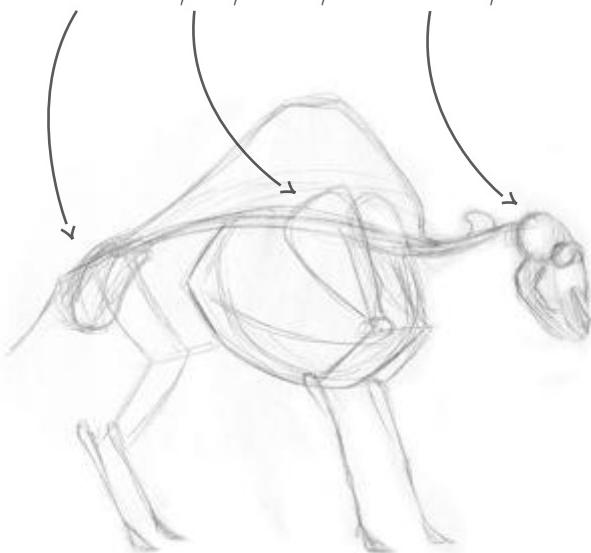


1 Wire frame

Starting with the 2H pencil, it's important to draw in the basic form of the animal's skeleton. Right now I'm focused on just getting in the wire frame of the skeleton. I start with the skull, work down the spine and quickly indicate the legs.

MULTI-FUNCTION PENCILS AS TOOLS
By holding your thumb against the pencil at a certain point, you can measure the length of a bone.

Keep shapes simple here. Scapula can be suggested as teardrop shapes and pelvises as V-shapes.

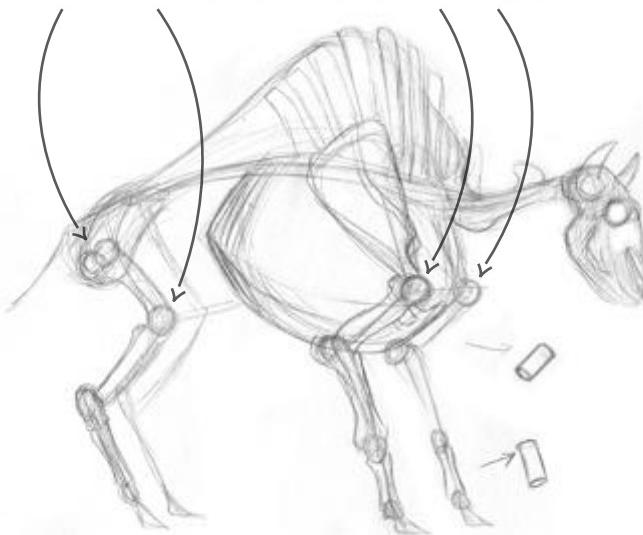


2 Landmarks and shapes

From the wire frame, I can begin to find the landmark bones: the cranium, the scapula, the rib cage and the pelvis. It's important to keep things general in this step. I'm only concerned with suggesting the general shape of the bones in question.

Artist insight Understand skeletons

A circle is a good indicator of joints. Invisible lines that align the knees with each other, called axes, are important for your skeleton and help keep it in perspective and proportion.



Adding in some value can help to turn the forms of your bones. Drawing out contours can also help indicate the volume of the forms.



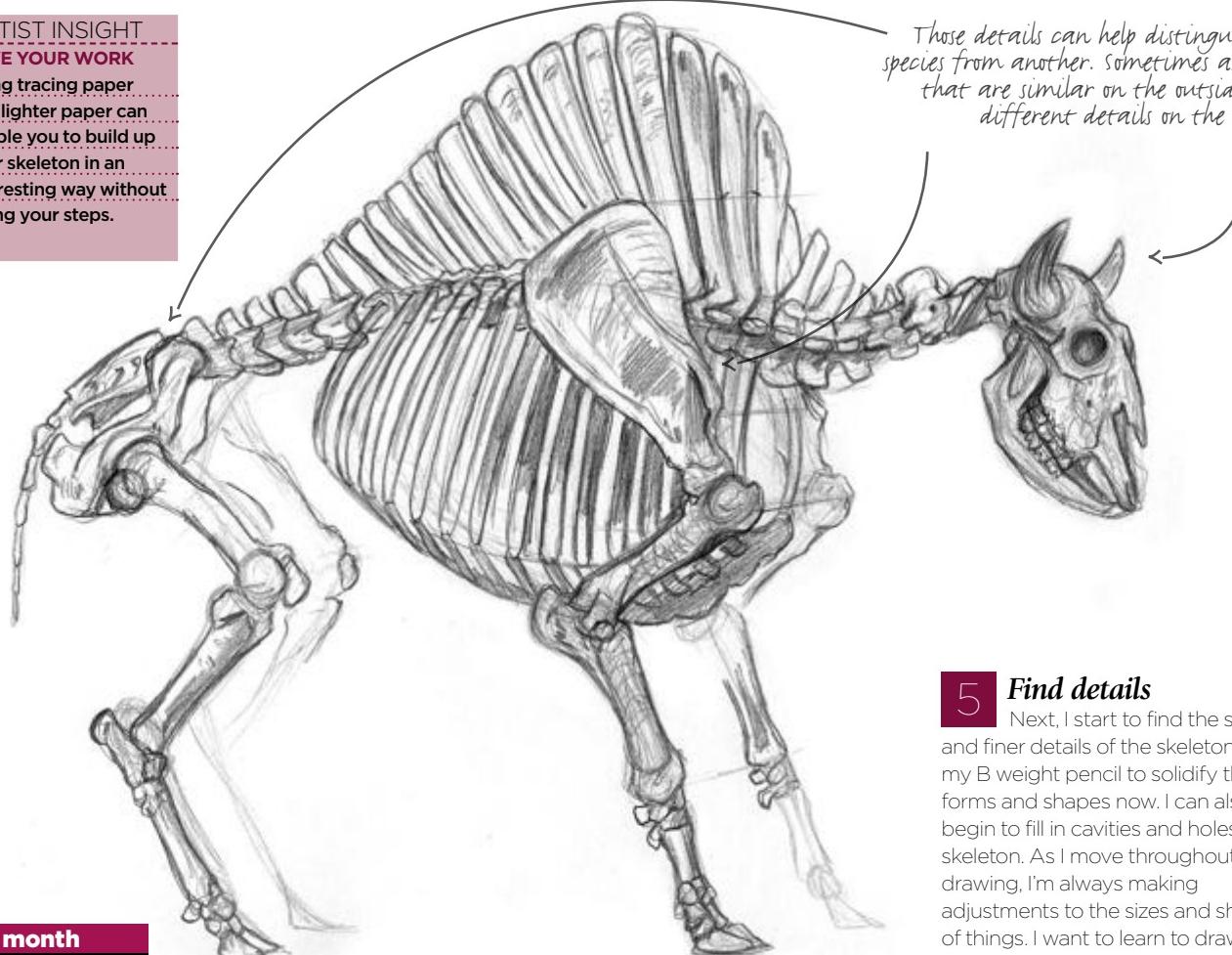
3 Specify a creature's bones

Now that the skeleton's shape is there, with an HB pencil I find the actual shapes of the bones using the wire frame and indicators as a guide. Think about line weight: keeping your line heavier on the underside of the bone can help indicate a light source.

4 Find the important details

I start to find the smaller, finer details. I use my B weight pencil to solidify those forms and shapes. I can also begin to fill in cavities and holes in the skeleton. As I move throughout the drawing, I'm always making adjustments to the sizes and shapes of things.

**ARTIST INSIGHT
SAVE YOUR WORK**
Using tracing paper or a lighter paper can enable you to build up your skeleton in an interesting way without losing your steps.



Those details can help distinguish one species from another. Sometimes animals that are similar on the outside have different details on the inside.

5 Find details

Next, I start to find the smaller and finer details of the skeleton. I use my B weight pencil to solidify those forms and shapes now. I can also begin to fill in cavities and holes in the skeleton. As I move throughout the drawing, I'm always making adjustments to the sizes and shapes of things. I want to learn to draw the skeleton quickly, but also correctly.

Next month

Muscle groupings

First Impressions

David Colman

The notable illustrator reveals why satisfaction is a consolation prize



Where did you grow up, and when did you realise you had a talent for art? I was born in New York and raised in Los

Angeles. I drew a lot as a kid, but dropped it all in high school and didn't find it again until I was in college. I really didn't know I had a talent, besides compliments from peers in grade school. My parents encouraged it, but never forced it on me. I guess I'm grateful for that, because I found my passion for art in my own way.

How did your upbringing influence your drawing style?

I don't know if my upbringing had any influence. But I do know my uncle told my parents not to force art education on me and to let it develop naturally.

Have you had any formal art education?

I have a BA in communication, but I didn't go to art school. I didn't find my passion for art again until I was in college. At that point I planned to use my creativity and get into advertising. I took one drawing class and I was hooked again, but at that time I still didn't know about animation as a career. I have no formal art training and, although I know it would have helped me get further sooner, I'm grateful for the path I took because it made my craft what it is today. I don't suggest my path to anyone because it's not for the faint-hearted and I was almost manic in how much I practised on my own from the few classes I took.

What has been the highlight of your career so far? Any low points?

There is no one highlight. I'm just grateful to continue to grow even after being well established. Plus the fact I earn a living doing what I love. Ninety per cent of the work force hates their job – I'm one of the 10 per cent. I'm fortunate that any times I might consider



ELEPHANT

David says he always creates a back story as he designs a character.

“I was almost manic in how much I practised on my own, from the few classes I took”

Next month
Lindsey Look

RACOON

David thinks his sculpting has greatly helped his animation skills over the years.

to be low points aren't really that low, they're just part of my journey. I'm adaptive and flexible to the changes that come with the industry, otherwise I might have hit some lows when no work was around for my skill set at that time. I do so much to earn a living outside of animation, in licensing, self-publishing art books, apparel lines and being part of start-up companies.

What was your first commercial character creation? And what was your most recent?

My first was for the animals in The Polar



Express. My most recent to air is the NeverBeast in the latest Tinker Bell film.

Have any of the characters you've created for animation ever hit the canvas fully formed?

There is no real satisfaction for a true artist – it's only temporary. Complete satisfaction is a consolation prize for a lesser artist. What might look perfect the night before will scream for revisions or start over the next morning. However, there's a certain feeling or personality that's sometimes caught in the first sketch, the perfect sell of who that character is. For that, yes, it happens and the real difficulty is maintaining that feel and tone throughout the full realisation of the character.

Do you tend to give your characters a back story as you draw them?

Yes I do. As designers we're creating a life, not just a static image. The back story we provide will in turn drive the shape choices, gesture, expressions, attitudes, colour and complete realisation of the character. Form follows function, with function being the character's narrative. We design who they are, not what they are.

Have you always sculpted in tandem to your drawing and painting work, or is it a recent development?

I sculpted early on in my career and I believe it really helped develop my understanding of artistic fundamentals. I was sculpting before I got my first art job in animation, but it definitely made me a better artist. I plan to get back to it one day, but just for me, not for any production position.

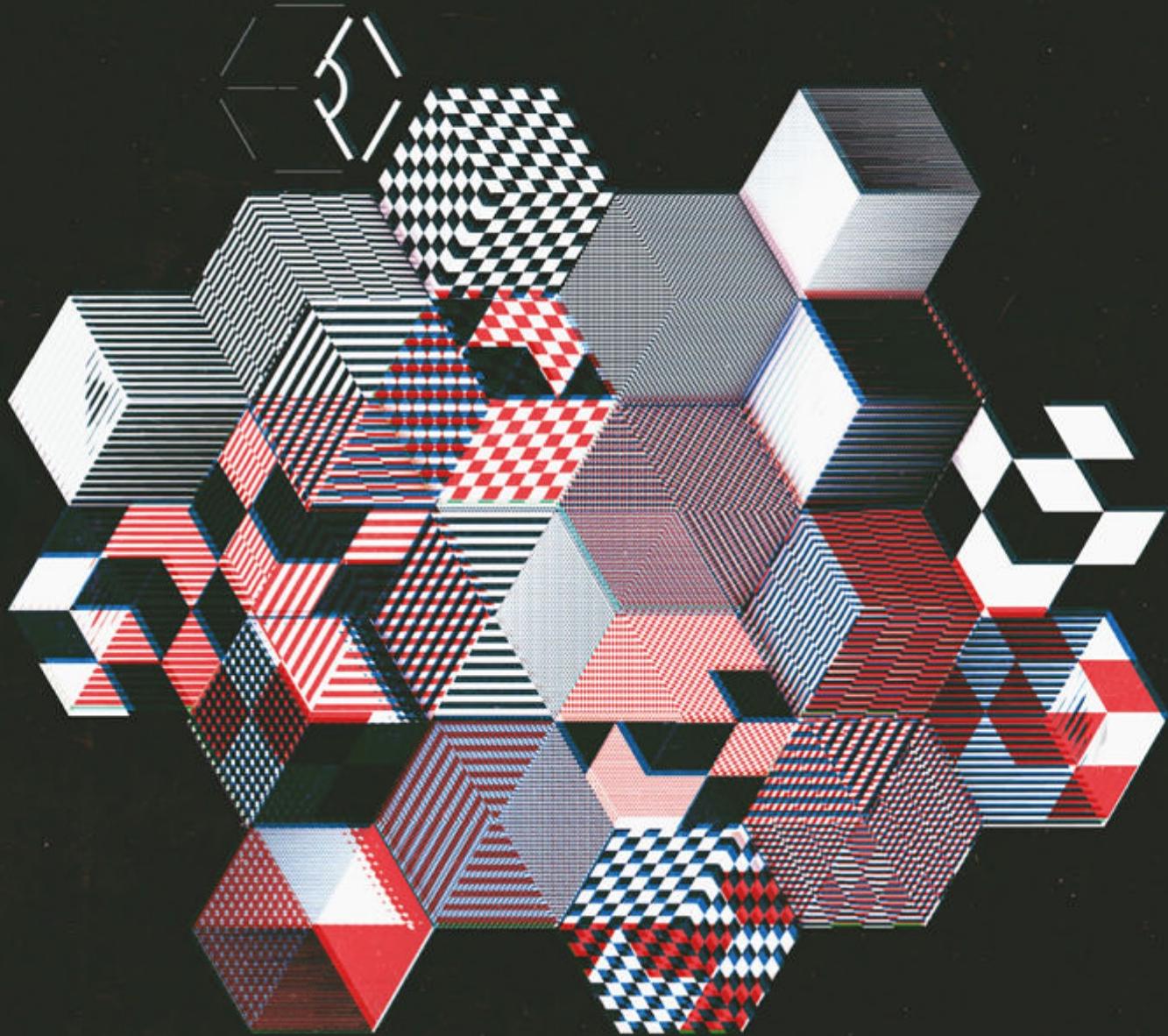
What advice would you give to your younger self?

Don't ever take anything personally. Continue to do what you're doing. And, you have to really want it.

How would you sum up your work, in under 10 words?

Aiming to evoke emotion and a connection with my audience.

David Colman is an illustrator and art director who's worked for Disney, Paramount, Sony and more, and has self-published numerous books including *The Art of Animal Character Design*. www.davidsdoodles.com.



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